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AN  
HISTORICAL SKETCH  
OF THE  
ORDER OF ST. DOMINIC;  
OR,  
A Memorial to the French People.

BY THE  
REV. FATHER LACORDAIRE,  
MEMBER OF THE SAME ORDER, OF THE FRENCH INSTITUTE, &c.

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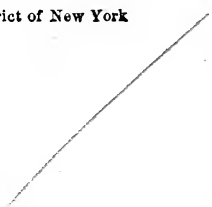
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## PREFACE TO THE AMERICAN EDITION.

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IN presenting to American readers one of the most eloquent and elegant treatises in any language, a word of explanation may be necessary. Its author, HENRY DOMINIC LACORDAIRE, was born on the 12th of May, 1802, and died in November, 1861. Few men in modern times exercised so great an influence over their contemporaries. His career in early life seems providentially to have fitted him for the great work he was to achieve. Born when the old faith of eighteen centuries had just begun to recover from the rudest shock, perhaps, that had ever tried its strength, he breathed in early youth the poisoned atmosphere of atheism and error. He did not escape the virulent effects of the unhealthy moral influences by which he was surrounded. His

life, from early youth until his twenty-second year, was that of an infidel, or at least of one coldly indifferent to religion. A lawyer by profession, a philanthropist in heart, fully sympathetic with the age in which he lived, a lover of the good and of the true from the instincts of his nature, he at length found in religion what he had failed to find elsewhere—the truth and the goodness which, in the heart of France, had suffered detriment indeed, but were not wholly uprooted. Immediately upon his conversion, he turned his attention to the ecclesiastical state; and entering the Seminary of St. Sulpice, in May, 1824, he became a priest in September, 1827. His connection with the great minds of France—Montalembert and De Lamennais—forms an important chapter in the church history of the nineteenth century. Suffice it here that, although his affection for De Lamennais was strong, his love of Catholic truth and his fidelity to the Holy See were stronger still.

In 1838 and '39 he entertained the idea of entering the Order of St. Dominic; but as this, as well as the other monastic orders, had been swept from the face of France by the boisterous waves of a frightful revolution, he was obliged to seek in Italy the opportunity of putting his design into execution. From Italy, therefore, he addresses this masterly *Memorial* to his country. France, although awakened by the sound of a mighty storm to a sense and to a desire of faith, was still intolerant of many of the institutions which that faith naturally produces. Lacordaire meets his country on this issue; and what he addresses to France on the question of his right to become a religious, is equally applicable, under the same circumstances, to all times and places.

The first two chapters of the *Memorial* are devoted to this discussion; and it will doubtless be acknowledged that there never was made a stronger case in favor of religious orders. Those, even, who may not be interested in the subject

can not fail to admire the ability with which it is treated. In the other chapters he traces, to use the words of his biographer, Father Chocarne, a broad outline of the Order of St. Dominic, in its most prominent characteristics, from the date of its foundation in the thirteenth century, till its revival by himself in the nineteenth.

In America there exist many misconceptions respecting religious orders in general, and respecting the Dominican order in particular. May it not be well to lift the veil which prejudice or ignorance has woven? Is it not time for candid minds to know the truth? We venture to assert that the perusal of this *Memorial* will go far to disabuse of their errors many whose minds are not incapable of honest and manly thought.



## CONTENTS.

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### MEMORIAL TO THE FRENCH PEOPLE.

Chap.	Page
I. Of the Legitimacy of Religious Orders in the State .	11
II. General idea of the Order of Preachers, and reasons for its re-establishment in France . . .	42
III. Labors of the Brethren as Preachers—their Missions in the Old and New Worlds . . .	73
IV. Labors of the Friars-Preachers as Doctors—St. Thomas of Aquinas . . . .	99
V. Artists, Bishops, Cardinals, Popes, and Saints of both sexes, given to the Church by the Order of St. Dominic . . . .	116
VI. The Inquisition . . . .	135
VII. Conclusion . . . .	181



## MEMORIAL TO THE FRENCH PEOPLE.

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### MY COUNTRY :

While you, with mingled joy and sorrow, pursue the task of forming modern society, one of your new children, a Christian by faith, a priest by the traditional unction of the Catholic Church, comes to claim his share in the liberties which you have won, and he himself has paid for. He prays you to read the Memorial now presented to you, that his wishes, his rights, his very heart, once known, you may grant him the protection you will always accord to what is useful and sincere. Never, my country, may you despair of your cause. Be it yours to overcome adversity by patience, and rise superior to prosperity by justice to your enemies. May you love God, who is the father of all that you hold dear; bend the knee to Jesus Christ, the liberator of the world. May you

never allow the eminent office you fill in the creation, to pass away to others ; and may you find more able servants than myself, but more devoted, none.

## CHAPTER I.


ON THE LEGITIMACY OF RELIGIOUS ORDERS IN  
THE STATE.

HAD I lived in an earlier period than our own, and had Divine Grace inspired me with the idea of serving God in a religious order, selecting that one most likely to appease the secret yearnings of my nature, and most in accordance with my vocation, I should have entered, without speaking on the subject, save only to God and to my friends. This simplicity of conduct was then possible—nay more, it was a duty, for nothing befits a Christian less in any character than noise and glare; but what was then possible, is not so to-day. We live in times when the man who wishes to become poor and the servant of all, finds more difficulty in so doing than he should in building up a fortune or acquiring a name. Almost all the powers of Europe, be they kings or journalists, partisans of absolute monarchy or liberty, are

leagued against the voluntary sacrifice of self; and never was the world in such dread of a bare-headed man, with a wretched woollen cassock on his back. If the religious orders were, as heretofore, possessors of vast patrimonies, preserving and enlarging the same by civil privileges; if their vows, recognized by the public authority, gave them any other strength than such as springs from a consent renewed daily—any character other than that of the most absolute liberty—we could understand the alarm abroad among powers and parties of all kinds. Some would quarrel with privilege for the bare fact of its being privilege; others would be concerned for the treasury, and the advantage it derives from the rapid transmission of property from hand to hand; others would insist upon individual liberty and freedom of conscience, threatened by religious engagements, not having for their sole guaranty, the inward perseverance of the soul in the same dispositions; others would endure no establishments from which modern society should not by some important modification have removed the stamp of the past. All these ideas can be understood.

But this is inexplicable—that some men, weary of the passions of the blood and of pride, and captivated by a love of God and man which detaches them from themselves, cannot assemble in a house of their own, and there, without privilege or vows recognized by the state, but held together by conscience only, live at the rate each of five hundred francs a year, engaged in those duties which humanity can not always comprehend, but which, at any rate, do hurt to no man. This is inexplicable, and yet it is the case. And when we, the enthusiastic lover of this present age, born in its very bosom, when we asked permission of it to believe in nothing, that permission was given us; when we claimed the privilege of aspiring to every trust and every honor, it was granted us; when we sought the liberty of influencing its destinies, by dealing with the gravest questions, and that in early youth, it was allowed us; when we asked wherewithal to live in affluence, this too was granted; but now, that penetrated by those divine elements which agitate this age likewise, we claim the liberty to follow the inspirations of our faith, to abandon every pretension, to live in poverty

with a few friends similarly disposed, we are all at once stopped short, put under the ban of I know not how many laws, and should have all Europe in combination to overwhelm us if it were needful. Meanwhile, in presence of those external dangers, we do not despair of ourselves, we rely on God who calls us, and on our country. We have been told that religious communities are forbidden by law in France. This is denied by many; while several maintain that such laws, supposing them to exist, have been virtually abrogated by the charter. I shall examine none of these questions, for I appear at this moment neither in the tribune nor at the bar of a tribunal—I appeal to an authority which is queen of the world, which, from time immemorial, has enacted and annulled laws, on which charters themselves depend, and whose decrees overlooked for a season, must one day or another be put in execution—from Public Opinion it is, I ask protection, and against her own self I shall demand it if necessary. For she has infinite resources, and the supremacy of her power is due to this alone, that she can change without ever selling herself.





But whatever be the bearing of positive legislation on the subject, certain it is, religious communities do exist in France. Notwithstanding the uncertainty and contradictions of the law, in spite of passions still glowing, they have established themselves, and thriven under every form of government—since the Revolution of 1830, as well as under the Empire and Restoration. Without any aid from the state beyond the merest toleration, they have lived by their own labor, and the co-operation of charity, and although not unassailed by distant attacks, they can say that insult has never visited their door, for forty years, even as scandal has never crossed its threshold. There must be some means of accounting for so extraordinary a stability on a soil so shifting. What can they be? First, it is evident that in the existing social order, there can be no coercion or seduction of any kind whatever employed to induce so large a number to prefer living in community to individual life. The act whereby, at the present day, you devote yourself to this kind of existence, is the exercise of choice, an act essentially free; and the great numbers of men

and women who adopt it as their only future, without fear and without regret, are evidence that life in community is the vocation of a certain number of souls. This disposition has at every time displayed itself, but it is more especially noticeable at the present day, if we consider at once the precarious condition of religious communities, and the passion for individuality which devours the heart of man. It must be, that in spite of their unfavorable circumstances, there exist, in human nature, other tastes, other inclinations, stronger than the instincts of even legitimate self-love. And what right has any man to forbid their gratification, provided they injure no one? What harm is done to the world by those poor girls, whose virtues have secured them a shelter for their youth and age? What harm is done by those laborious solitaries, who ask of the freedom of their country no other privilege than to mingle their sweat? Where is the harm done by those brethren and sisters of the hospitals, by those priests who devote themselves in common to carry Christianity and civilization to nations still barbarous, or who evangelize their own coun-

try, or educate the youth intrusted to them by the fathers of families? What harm is there in all this? Such tastes, if not meritorious, are at least innocent. And is it conceivable that a country, in which liberty has been proclaimed for half a century (understanding by liberty the right to do what injures no one), is it conceivable that such a country should persecute to the uttermost a kind of life which pleases many, and does hurt to no one? To what purpose has so much blood been shed for the rights of man? Is not the religious life one of the rights of man, even if it be not among the wants of humanity? This poor girl who can not marry, who knows not where to find a friend on earth, is it not her right to bring her portion of a hundred crowns to a community, whose sister and daughter she becomes, by which she shall be lodged, and clothed, and consoled, and from which she shall receive for greater security, the love of God, who can never deceive. If some men have no liking for this kind of life, no one forces them to embrace it. If, rich and happy, they know not the usual miseries of mind and body, so much the better

for them : but it ill becomes them to deprive others of an asylum, which ought to be held sacred, though it only gratified a caprice of nature.

A continual source of illusion to some upright men is the idea of the former convents continually before their minds. Formerly the convents entered into the civil organization of states—objects of envy by their riches, they relieved noble families from every concern for their younger sons, or else for the dowry of their daughters. Vocations innumerable, industriously promoted at home, peopled with indolent and unaspiring souls the long corridors of the monasteries. Moreover, men were attracted by the happiness of living within those lofty walls, behind which it was said lay a luxurious existence, and in many cases, owing to the corruption of the worldly-minded, the saying was but too correct. This is certainly true, though perhaps exaggerated; but we forget that the order of things in question has been completely done away with by the bare fact of the state no longer recognizing religious vows; and such is the real object of the legislation, so often appealed to

against communities. They have ceased to be civil institutions, and having now no other ties than those of conscience, they are protected by conscience against the abuses which the hand of power always forces upon holy things. Thus, for the last forty years, religious communities present in France a spectacle so pure, so perfect, that you must needs be very ungrateful to reproach them with the faults of a period which has gone by. The glory of France during those forty years lies in having reproduced these things which can never die. In this she resembles nature, who, while she overturns the ancient trees which had supplied shade to generations, fails not to preserve their germs, from which shall issue new trunks, to the end that shade and fruit be not wanting to posterity. We must not then say that France is trodden under foot, since every thing she has destroyed reappears; we must, on the contrary, pronounce France victorious, since she has preserved germs, the annihilation of which would entail perpetual sterility, and we find them developed under new forms in a breast renewed in youth. Whoever aims at the destruction of a principle seeks to

enthroned death, and his labor shall certainly be vain, for God, who has given men power over individual existences, has placed their source beyond his reach. Nature and society have an incorruptible sap, and they laugh to scorn the speculators who think to change essences—to abolish oaks or monks by law; oaks and monks are equally eternal.

If we look more narrowly into the present constitution of religious communities, we shall be able to understand better still, how they maintain their successful struggle against every prejudice. A religious community is made up of three elements—the material, the spiritual, and the active. I understand by the material element, the external mechanism of life, that is to say, the rules which have regard to lodging, dress, food, rest, rising, and, in a word, every thing relating to the sustenance of the body. The spiritual element consists in the three vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, whence issue, and to which are linked, all the relations with God. The elements of action are the means by which a religious body influences society. It is easy to see how these three elements escape

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uninjured in any country where brute force is not the only principle of government.

To begin, therefore, with the material element : what are we to understand by rights and liberty, if citizens are not allowed to live in the same house, to eat at the same table, to rise and go to rest at the same hour, and wear the same kind of dress? What becomes of property, of the liberty of residence and personal liberty, if citizens can be driven from their home, because they perform in common the actions of everyday life. The number, at least, necessary to constitute an infraction of the law ought to be determined, and below that precise number, life in community will always be possible, until it comes to a declaration, that no one French citizen can lodge with another unless he have the consent of the king and the chambers. In ordinary societies, the right of association is much less evident, and the guaranties for order much less complete ; nevertheless, the law allows them, provided they do not exceed in number twenty individuals. Why then should religious communities be denied the benefit of this provision, which is not after all particularly liberal? We

can respect the liberty of twenty individuals assembling in a place which is neither their property nor their actual dwelling, and yet the association of twenty individuals living peaceably in their own house, is treated as a crime against the law. For no association (and this is worthy of remark) presents to society such ample guaranties for order as a religious body. The religious life demands so many virtues, that a monastery where it is practiced without the aid of civil laws, and by the sole power of conscience, is a marvel, and entitled to admiration. We might even say that a community is not an association, but a mere family, having all the rights and characters of such: and to prove the difference which exists between association and community, we need only observe, that were an association obliged to live as a community, it would dissolve immediately from the sheer impossibility of fulfilling the conditions.

The spiritual element, it is true, which constitutes the religious family, is a vow. Were it only an act of consent renewed daily, no one would have the folly to gainsay it. But a vow,



an irrevocable act! the tyranny of one moment over an entire future! Here we have the same objection which the partisans of divorce urge against marriage: some one day you love, and that day holds you bound forever. The natural family, equally with the religious, is bound by the law of perpetuity, the sway of the past over the future—and the objection can not be so very formidable, since, in spite of it, marriage has generally been indissoluble since the days of Adam. Moreover, where is the past that does not in some way bind the future? What moment in the human life can we point out as really irrevocable? People imagine they have escaped all they leave behind. But, free as we are to regret it, we are not free from the duties it entails, and which our very regrets must consecrate. Although the parallel between the natural and the religious family is sufficient to legitimate the latter, still we are far from resting our defense upon it, for the marriage vow is under the protection of the penal code, the vow of the religious is under the safeguard of his own conscience—that is to say, force maintains the indissolubility of marriage, while liberty alone

secures the indissolubility of the claustral tie. Should the religious grow tired of his rule—he has only to withdraw. Who detains him? His own free will, his constantly renewed adhesion to his promise, his enduring love of God. True, his vow is for him a binding law—what then? the law is his own work, and his obedience to it lasts during pleasure and no longer. To make a law, and obey it voluntarily, is not this the most perfect code of liberty?

If the vow be sacred, because an act free alike in origin and execution, it is much more, considered in its essence; for, in this point of view, it is an act of religion establishing an intimate relation between the soul and God. Here conscience challenges her inviolability—she demands to know who has the right to forbid her, under any penalty whatsoever, from establishing with God what relations she may choose. The vow is nothing more than an act of faith, whereby the soul, making a certain promise to God, believes him to accept that promise; remove faith, always revocable, for it is a virtue, and the vow ceases to be binding upon man. To forbid a vow, therefore, is to forbid an act of

faith. A contract drawn up in these terms would be valid : “ We, the undersigned, throw our properties into a common fund, and undertake to live together as long as it may please us, in such a way, that the share of those who withdraw or die, shall remain for the benefit of those who continue.” But add one single condition : say, “ We undertake *before God*,” and the contract becomes unlawful, because placed under the protection of an act of faith ; because the idea of God enters into the engagement, and it becomes a vow. Were it not for this act of faith, you might have lived tranquilly with your friends and in your house. This act of faith changes every thing. You will soon see the police at your door and in your chambers. You may appeal, if you please, to the rights of property, residence, personal liberty. These things you shall be told are sacred ; but the liberty of conscience is still more so, and for that reason every thing must be sacrificed to relieve you, in spite of yourself, from the intolerable burden of your vows, which it is true will continue to bind you after your removal, but that is your own affair. They do not think of removing the faith in which

lies the whole strength of your vow ; you are only deprived of the consolation of fulfilling it. You are allowed the liberty of inward servitude (who can deprive you of that?), you only lose the servitude of external liberty—what have you to complain of ?

It would have been no derision had the French Revolution said to the religious: “ Perhaps there are some among you who entered these cloisters against their own will; let such know the gates lie open, and they have the protection of their conscience.” Nor should there have been any derision in adding: “ The nation takes back the property which your ancestors and ours gave you formerly ; she believes the sacrifice necessary to the well-being of the country ; and while she leaves you wherewithal to support life, recommends you, at the same time, to suffer the stroke with the dignity of men who have renounced the earth for the love of God and man. Now that the old order of things is at an end by this terrible and extraordinary act, go whithersoever you will. Build for yourselves by your virtues, new dwellings, under the protection of our common rights, and commit your-

selves without fear to the long future which opens up before you—Providence sends revolutions to purify, not to destroy.” This language might have been unjust, but not derisive. The mockery lies in pretending, under the sanction of liberty, to untie bonds you do *not* untie, because they are fastened round the inmost soul of man, and to enforce this strange deliverance by invading the most sacred rights. When the Trappists were driven from Mount Melleray, did they not bear away their vows along with their faith? Of what were they deprived, but of peace, of their country, of the fruit of their toil, of the liberties bedewed with the blood of their fathers and contemporaries?

Lawful as a free act, and as an act of faith, the religious vow is not less so as an act of devotedness. The man who takes it stands pledged to poverty, to chastity, to obedience; that is to say, to the realization, as far as in him lies, of the most ardent wishes of the best friends of humanity, and the dreams of the boldest politicians. What does the man who loves his fellow wish, but that all his brethren should earn their bread by labor, that marriage should not

bring shame and misery upon them, and that a wise government may procure peace, without exacting servitude in return? What does the most speculative politician plan beyond an universal federation, which, securing to all men a moral equality of education and fortune, may thus keep the population of the globe in balance with its fertility—give power by election to the most worthy, and secure obedience from the less worthy by conviction? These desires and these dreams, the possible and the impossible, are accomplished in a religious community.

By means of the vow of poverty, all the brethren who submit to it become equal, whatever may have been their birth and merit in the world. The cell of the prince differs in nothing from that of the swineherd; and this equality is not confined to the narrow precincts of the monastery, it takes in all humanity. In the same way as God when he assumed the human form became like unto all men, so the religious when he takes the garb of poverty is even as the least of all.

By the sacrifice of chastity he makes room for a marriage to replace his own. He en-

\*courage those whose fortune does not allow this seductive, but onerous engagement. For neither celibacy nor poverty are the creation of the monk, they both existed before him, and he has done no more than raise them to the dignity of virtues. The soldier, the servant, the poor laborer, the portionless girl, are condemned to celibacy. What then? we dismiss our servants when they do marry, and we expel the monk because he does not!

What shall I say of religious obedience? Does not the world know the meaning of passive obedience? I will venture to maintain the contrary, and affirm that there is in the world only one description of obedience perfectly free, and that is the religious. No one hitherto has disputed with me the necessity of obedience in man; but there exists a proper anxiety to preserve that obedience from baseness and injustice. For the attainment of this, two means have been devised—election and law. Election is intended to confer power on the most worthy, law to define the limits of his jurisdiction; but owing to the infirmity of human things, election is always in the hands of the

few, so that the minority may oppress the majority; and, on the other hand, as law proceeds from the consent of the majority, so that the latter may oppress the minority. This is the fatal circle in which all politics revolve, where they know no other law than human will, no other election than the choice of man. The majority not enjoying the right of election, clamors for electoral reform, and the minority, which has not consented to a law, demands legislative changes. Both say they are oppressed, and both yield to force. Such is passive obedience, that is to say, involuntary submission to an order of things which has not the approval of our reason. Obedience is active, liberal, and glorious only when the understanding and will acquiesce, and this character it can not have for all, save in a government where the election and the law imply neither majority nor minority. This is the case in religious communities, as they are generally constituted. All the religious elect directly their immediate, and indirectly their mediate superior; regarding the election all the while, not as the result of their own will, but of the invisible influence



of the Holy Spirit, who directs their hearts. The universality of the vote and their profound conviction of the divine intervention, exalt their obedience to the highest degree of honor it is possible to conceive here below. The elected governs the electors, because God and they wished it at the same moment. What may suffice, however, to secure the honor of obedience, may not be enough to insure its justice. Above those who are governed, and above him who governs, is an everlasting, immutable, universal law, admitted by all as in its principle the divine essence itself—a law proclaimed from the beginning of the world—a law renewed, and more and more unveiled by the God made man—the law of love, which is thus epitomized: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thyself;” and again, “He who wishes to be first among you, let him be the last, and he who wishes to be greatest, let him be the servant of all;” and, besides this supreme law, which regulates the relations between brother and brother, there is a second, equally directing all, namely, the par-

ticular rule of the order established by its founder and its patriarchs; where all the offices and all the duties are provided for in such detail, that nothing is left to discretion that could be withdrawn from its control.

When people speak of the passive obedience of religious, it is evident there is a misunderstanding. If they mean to say that the religious have promised obedience to every thing that may strike their superior's fancy, they assert a thing absurdly erroneous. Religious promise to a superior of their own choice, obedience in every thing conformable to the Divine law and the statutes of the order. If it be said that their obedience involves an entire submission of the understanding and the will, it is this fact precisely which takes from their obedience any thing of a passive character. In no society do there exist equally strong defenses against power, or such ample guaranties in favor of the citizens.

As to the active element, which is the third in the constitution of religious orders, in respect of it also, they claim the common liberties of citizens, and more, even, if possible. No sooner

has the inhabitant of the monastery crossed its threshold, than he meets at the gate the law which determines the acts, the rights, the duties of every one. Does he wish to preach, he must have the license of the bishop; is it his desire to teach in schools, he must make good his capacity before those whom the authorities have directed to superintend instruction. Should he think of tilling the earth, he must observe the regulations of agriculture; the only difference between him and ordinary laborers is, that he must do more, and require less.

Whoever shall consider dispassionately these characteristics of religious orders, will readily understand how they rise again from their ashes with so much facility, in defiance of external obstacles. I was on the Lake of Geneva in the autumn of 1828, when a Genevese, touching his neighbor with his elbow, said aloud, as he looked at me, "This race revives from its ashes." He knew not that resurrection is the most authentic sign of divinity, and that Christ named it to his disciples as the sovereign and final mark of the truth of his revelation. Nothing has ever lived without embodying something true, natural, and

useful, but nothing ever revives which is not necessary, and does not contain in itself the condition of immortality. Death is too terrible an assault to admit of recovery, if the assailed be not immortal. And look at us returning \*—monks and nuns, brethren and sisters of every name, we overspread the soil from which we were expelled forty years ago, by an age admirably mighty in accumulating ruins—an age which produced the greatest geniuses to make, and the grandest captains to defend them. In vain! Nothing has been able to withstand the force of necessity, as the harvest covers a field which has been upturned by the plow, but where the winds of Heaven come to scatter seed. We do not appeal to this with pride. Pride is not the sentiment for a traveler on his way home, knocking at every door for succor. We have returned, because we could not help doing so—because we are the first who have been conquered by the life which is within us; our own immortality is as little imputable to us as its sap is to the acorn, which in virtue of it springs heavenward, beside the dying oak. We have been resusci-

\* In 1839.

tated by neither gold nor silver, but by a spiritual germination established in the world by its Creator, and not less indestructible than that of nature. We have had neither the favor of government nor that of opinion to protect our existence, but only a secret strength, which upholds every thing that is true.

And we put it to those even who are astonished or irritated by our presence—we ask them, is it just, in a country where personal liberty is a principle, to assail a description of life which injures no one, and is so inherent to human nature, that the sternest reverses can not prevent it from reviving? Is it just, in a country where property and home are sacred, to drag from their dwellings men who live in peace, and without offense of any kind? Is it just, in a country where the idea of universal fraternity sways every generous mind, to condemn those holy republics, in which men consecrate themselves to poverty and chastity, through an immense love of equality with the most lowly? Is it just, in a country where election and the law are the bases of civil obedience, to strike at bodies constituted by a more comprehensive

system of election and efficient laws than its own? Is it just, that in a country where every one is admissible to the social functions, they should be withheld from citizens who do no wrong beyond bringing to the general competition a greater spirit of sacrifice? Before heaven and earth we ask, is this just? Does it not amount to creating a class of Parias?

To all these queries I know one answer only, and it is this—"You are quite right; all that you reproach us with is the extreme of injustice, and involves an open, social contradiction. But we are the enemies of your religious doctrine; it is too powerful to be encountered with fair weapons. You draw from your faith so perfect a self-denial, that we, men of the world, married, ambitious, and not thinking of the future, because the present fills us, are unable to gain the ascendant. For all that, we must conquer you, because we hate you. We shall not employ fire and sword against you, but by means of the law we shall put you out of the protection of the law. We shall represent your devotedness as a privilege dangerous to the state, and to be gotten rid of by ostracism. You shall have

no share of liberty, because your virtues have raised you beyond *equality*." These thoughts may belong to some men—we believe they are not those of France. Those even who entertain them do not understand their full import. For they love their country without doubt, and the greatest misfortune that could befall her, were the real development of such principles. Certainly, it is not difficult to conceive that a nation should be greatly to be pitied where two fundamental principles of existence should be at open war, both supported by a portion of the citizens, and both radically indestructible by their essence and their history. The Catholic religion is the religion of the French people. Born of an act of faith upon the battle-field, France is mindful of her origin, and has never ceased to combat for the Church during fourteen centuries; she it was who, on the plains of Burgundy and Aquitaine, vanquished Arianism, almost mistress of the world; she it was who by the sword of Charles Martel arrested the Islamite invasion, and gave its final and solid position to the Papacy, by the genius of Charlemagne; she it was who opened the Crusades, that vast war of

Christian civilization against Oriental brutality, and was always in the van of the battle. She it was who, in the sixteenth century, when the Church was breaking up in all directions, threw herself between England and Germany, both grown infidel, and arrested by her massive resistance the torrent of skepticism and servitude. She, in fine, it was who, for the last forty years, notwithstanding the violence perpetrated in her name against the Church, has saved her faith from the universal assault. France is Catholic, by the triple virtue of her history, her spirit of devotedness, and the luster of her genius. Her Catholicity shall cease only in her tomb. But, at the same time, France is a land of liberty, that is to say, a country where, according to the expression of Bossuet, there have always existed *certain fundamental laws, any thing done contrary to which is, by the bare fact, null and void*. You can detect in the breast of this people, touch it at what time you will, the beating of the German heart, born and reared amid the forests. To expect that it should lose this primitive character, is to hope for its death. So long as a little French blood continues to exist,



justice will have an armed defender. What are we to infer from those two fundamental principles of French nationality? What, but that they ought to combine and perfect each other? What farther infer, but that their obstinate conflict strikes at the very existence of the country?

The past ought to be our monitor. For fifty years the faith and liberty of France have had to meet with great reverses. Has either of the two been overcome? Then they stand as on the first day of the assault. France is at the head of Catholic countries; and she is at the head of free countries too. To declare that one of these principles *must* forever be hostile to the other, amounts to a decree of everlasting discord; it unites us, to dig a grave in which the ashes of generations shall continue to repel each other. How can any one accept a liberty which only benefits his enemy? Despotism herself can not dispense with justice. How can liberty, which *is* justice, survive without her?

As far as we Catholics are concerned, we are guiltless of so blind and fatal an enmity. During the three grand epochs of the formation of

modern society, we held out our hand to her. In 1789, the majority of the Chamber of Clergy was the first to unite with the *Tiers Etat*, and thus carry the substitution of vote by person for vote by order, obliterating so the last remnant of feudal institutions. Notwithstanding the ingratitude of the republic to the Church, no sooner did a man present himself to build up order upon glory, than the Sovereign Pontiff entered into his views, by consenting to things till then unheard of. The world saw the ratification of a concordat which abolished an ancient Church, dethroning an entire episcopacy, the representative of the past, while the successor of St. Peter traversed Europe, to set the crown upon the brows of that new man. In 1830, the most remarkable priest that issued from the Church of France since the days of Bossuet, careered in the whirlwind before the nation, and if he has perished therein, it is less owing to his having overpassed his limit, than to his not having understood all the justice that was done him.\*

What have we received in exchange for our good will? The Republic met us with spolia

\* De Lamennais.

tion, exile, and death. Napoleon imprisoned the Church in the organic articles of the concordat, and the Sovereign Pontiff in Savina and Fontainebleau. In 1830 alone, justice began to show herself. We bless Heaven for it, and we entreat our fellow-citizens not to disdain the fruits of this first step in the path of conciliation. The world is shaken to its center. It has need of every resource at its command. And since, amid the selfishness which threatens the honor and security of modern society, souls are found to set the example of voluntary self-denial, let us at least respect their work—let us grant to virtue the right of asylum formerly allowed to crime. The earth has always travelers weary of the road, and no one of us can flatter himself that he will not one day be of the number. The friars-preachers have a particular right to the tolerance of the country, for to them France owes one of her finest provinces, the Dauphiné: Humbert, its last prince, resigned it to Philip of Valois, the day before he took the habit of Saint Dominic. To-day we ask in exchange a few feet of French territory, to live there in peace.

## CHAPTER II.

GENERAL IDEA OF THE ORDER OF PREACHERS,  
AND REASONS FOR ITS RE-ESTABLISHMENT IN  
FRANCE.

THE Catholic Church, considered in reference to the hierarchy which governs the body of Christians, is called the *Teaching Church*. This is the name assigned her by tradition, and under which Jesus Christ himself addressed her in those last and famous words to his Apostles: "Go, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to keep all things whatsoever I have told to you." Her very title admonishes the hierarchic Church, that teaching is her chief ministry—because teaching flows from faith, which is the source of all Christian virtues. The sacraments themselves are meant to give light as well as heat to the soul. Now, Catholic teaching, in order to its being complete, requires apostles, pastors, and doctors. The

apostle brings the truth to those who knew it not before ; he is like Jesus Christ, a wayfarer, going from town to town, and from village to village, conversing and preaching, announcing that the kingdom of God is at hand, using language suitable to the understandings of those to whom he has devoted himself. The pastor instructs the flock already formed ; he is stationary, night and day, obedient to the wants of his sheep ; his language is that of a man fully convinced of the community of sentiment which binds him to the assembly of the faithful. He does not appeal, like Saint Paul before the Areopagus, to the traditions of paganism, or to the testimony of profane poets, but to Jesus Christ, *the author and consummator of all things*. To the doctor is assigned the instruction of the priesthood, and the defense of truth by learned controversy—he is a man of study—he passes his life amid the treasures of tradition, and contemplates from the sublimest height that man can reach the divine connection that links together all the phenomena, and all the ideas which go to make up the movement of the universe.

These three kinds of instruction, differing in object and in means, are represented by the three great Apostles, St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. John. St. Peter, the prince of the Apostles, was neither an eloquent man nor a writer. A simple fisherman by a lake side, where he earned his livelihood with his nets, he was summoned away by Jesus Christ, who bestowed on him an abundant faith without raising his original capacity; and though destined to be the Rock of the Church, he three times denies his Master, that he may learn from his own weakness to compassionate the weakness of his brethren; the keys are his symbol. St. Paul, the prince of preachers, was brought up in the knowledge of the law, amid the doctors of his day. During the life of Jesus Christ he knows nothing of him, and persecutes him after his death, to the end that, initiated by experience in the mysteries of error, he may know the strong and the weak; and when he shall one day announce the Gospel to all nations, may learn not to despair of the conversion of any soul, no matter how stubborn against the truth. His genius is as bold as his expeditions—he understands the characters of

the nations he traverses—he quotes their poets for the Athenians, and interprets their sacred inscriptions; in his own words, *he becomes all to all*. His symbol is the sword. You behold St. John, the prince of doctors, reclining on the bosom of his Master, and putting questions to him, which alarm the others. He is a virgin, because the senses are the chief obstructions in the way of truth; he is the beloved disciple; unfamiliar with the embarrassments of the general government of the Church, and the fatigues of apostolic expeditions, he dies, not like Saint Peter by the cross, nor like Saint Paul by the sword, but peaceably in his bed, at the close of a divine old age, having only strength sufficient to pronounce these words, which are the beginning and the end of all instruction—“My children, love one another.” His symbol is the eagle.

In the first days of the Church, those three grand functions of instruction, the apostolic, the pastoral, and the scientific, were not usually found separate. A priest, dispatched by his lawful superior, set out for some country where the light of the gospel had not yet appeared,

traversed it an apostle, and became at once the pastor and the doctor of a Christianity established by his preaching; happy if he could likewise become its martyr, and shed upon its foundations what remained of the fertilizing blood already nearly drained in the service of God. Thus were founded the Churches of the East—thus the Church of the Gauls; but in course of time the pastoral ministry grew more complex—the bishops came to be overburdened with a multitude of duties, such as taking part in general and other councils, maintaining their relations with the civil power, arbitrating matters in dispute, and attending to the temporal concerns of their churches. Side by side with this immense development of external action, Catholic science continued to advance. It embraced not merely the Holy Scriptures and oral tradition, books accumulated with the growth of controversies. It became necessary to know the writings of former doctors, the decisions of councils, the history of heresies—philosophical doctrines, ancient and contemporary; antiquity, Christian and profane; in a word, that enormous sum-total of facts and controversies of which



ecclesiastical science is made up. The difficulties of the apostleship were in like manner increased by the requirements of the pastoral ministry, which, at first confined to the great towns, soon overspread the country parts with churches regularly constituted. This fast organization engrossed all the attention of the bishop, whose duty it no longer was to send forth missionaries to distant lands, but to devote himself to his own flock at home. Division of labor was the only expedient to meet the necessities of Catholic teaching; but this was not effected immediately by a decision *à priori*. Nothing of the kind took place in the Church, because with her every thing follows the course of nature; resources spring up beside the wants they are needed to supply, in a slow and almost imperceptible gradation; and hence it is that man appears to have nothing to do with their establishment, and the hand of God alone is seen, manifest in the general movement of things and ages.

As far back as the sixth century, Saint Benedict had founded the monastic institute in the West—his object had reference neither to the

apostleship nor divine science, but simply to the sanctification of souls, by prayer, labor, and solitude. The Popes, however, found occasion to employ the Benedictines in the diffusion of the gospel. Saint Gregory the Great, for instance, sent to England the monk Augustin, who converted the island, and founded the see of Canterbury. On the other hand, during the invasion of the barbarians, the monasteries were the asylums of letters and science, the remnant of which they saved. But these two great facts had nothing to do with the idea of using religious orders by means of a new organization, for the purposes of apostolic and scientific instruction. They were left precisely what they had been, save that they that were occasionally applied to different purposes from those contemplated in their institution.

In the beginning of the thirteenth century the Western Church was threatened for the first time by serious heresies. They were no longer of that class which the active and subtile imagination of the Greeks gave birth to, in opposition to Catholic doctrine—speculative errors, which were only a kind of weakness or doc-

trinal epilepsy in presence of infinitude. But the first steps of the disease in the west betrayed the practical character of that region. It went right home by attacking the Church, that is to say, the religious commonwealth—and for six hundred years, whether represented by the Vaudois, or Wickliffe, or John Huss, or Luther, it has not relinquished the prey so firmly clutched; and the question which agitated the thirteenth century is still the question of our own. This social question was then debated in the south of France, where the enemies of the Church were drawn together by chance or design. Innocent III. filled the chair of Saint Peter. That vigilant pastor sent, to combat the heresy, three legates apostolic, taken from that renowned order of Citeaux which Bernard still illumined from his grave. The embassy, or the mission, call it which you will, was composed of virtuous men, but all the while environed by the pomp of a victorious religion. These were not the ways of Providence, who reads the future.

About the beginning of 1205, the legates apostolic sat at Montpellier, weary and discouraged by their ill success, when a Spanish

bishop, returning to his country after a long journey, happened to pass through the town. He went to visit the legates, and the conversation turned on the heretics and the difficulties of the mission undertaken. Whereupon the bishop told the legates, that if they meant to succeed, they should lay aside all outward pomp, travel on foot, and enforce their exhortations by the example of a poor and austere life. Unexpected as was this advice, it reached the hearts of those to whom it was addressed, for they were true Christians, and in the breast of a true Christian every magnanimous sentiment finds a response. It was too plain, besides, that instruction, seconded by the example of unbounded devotedness, was the only means of acting in these districts, so deeply cankered, and so constantly reproaching the Church with her riches and her power. The legates adopted the advice given them by the Spanish bishop, Don Diego de Asévedo, and he himself, sending his equipages to Spain, joined the legates and other abbots of Citeaux who arrived soon afterward. They were seen to spread themselves over the towns and villages, going on foot, conversing,

disputing—upheld in their preaching and in their sufferings by truth which is the mother of all strength and of all joy. Nevertheless, their success, though greater than before, did not meet their expectations. After two years, wearied out, or called away by other duties, they left the land they had in vain moistened by their sweat. Only one man remained; a Spaniard of illustrious family, he had been brought to France by the bishop Don Diego, his friend, by whom he had been appointed canon of the cathedral of Osma; his name was Dominic de Gusman.

It is worthy of remark, that most founders of religious orders, though not natives of France, went thither to found their establishments. Thus Saint Columbanus, the framer of a celebrated monastic rule, repaired to France from Ireland, and established himself at Luxeuil. Saint Bruno left the banks of the Rhine, to seek amid the mountains of the Dauphiné a retreat which gave its name to the Chartreux, whose father he was. Saint Norbert, another German, obtained from the Bishop of Laon, a marsh, where he established the monastery and order

of the Premonstratensians. At a later period the hill of Montmartre saw a band of Spanish youths begin with a vow that Society of Jesus which is now diffused throughout the world.

Dominic, drawn into France by the same hand as his predecessors and successors, knew not as yet why he had gone thither. Soon the clash of arms broke upon his peaceful preachings. The crusade had been published against the Albigenses, and the Christian barons flocked in crowds to the banner of their general, Count Simon de Montfort. "Under his conduct," says the Abbé Godescard, "they were guilty in Languedoc of cruelty and injustice that never can be palliated. In many, an apparent zeal for religion, concealed a mass of avarice, ambition, and revenge." \* But whatever be men's opinion of this war, Dominic had the glory before God and man of being the redeeming feature of the time, amid the blood then shed. Never had religion had a more unsullied representative beside the warrior armed in defense of the faith, and bearing in the same breast the unction of

\* *Vies des Pères, Martyrs, et autres Principaux Saints*, t. v., p. 457, note.

the Christian, and the ferocity of the soldier. Contemporary history shows him to have been so absent from the war, that men, prejudiced by what they have heard beforehand, are astonished. Neither in the deliberations of the chiefs, nor in the treaties between the hostile parties, nor in the councils of the bishops, is he anywhere to be found. While the legates and Count de Montfort, not under the immediate eye of Innocent III. overstepped their powers, and obliged the Pontiff at a later period to protest against their conduct in the council of Lateran, Dominic has drawn from the Spanish Cortes, assembled in the Island of Leon, in 1812, the declaration, that "he never encountered heresy with other arms than prayer, patience, and instruction." Six hundred years after his death, his country laid upon his tomb this glorious testimony.

The history of Innocent III. has just been written by M. Hurter, a Protestant, and President of the Consistory of Schaffhausen. He devotes almost an entire volume to the Albigensian crusade, and the name of Dominic hardly occurs throughout. Thus, in this cen-

ture, reserved for the correction of so many current errors, from the center of Protestant science, as well as from the Spanish Cortes, impartial words have proceeded, doing justice to the man whom Providence threw into the midst of those sanguinary conflicts, to be a model of the spirit of Christianity.

Prayer, patience, and instruction continued to be the only arms employed by Dominic, before as well as after the war. He preached and held conference incessantly, without noticing the outrages that were heaped upon him even in the streets, and under no concern for his life, which was constantly threatened. One day that he had escaped death, a heretic, asking him through bravado, what he should have done had he fallen into the snare—"I should have asked you (he said), not to dispatch me at once, but having dismembered me limb by limb, and left me for some time weltering in my blood, to finish by cutting off my head." His apostolic labors did not prevent him from attending to a convent of young girls, founded by him at Prouille, not far from Carcassone; for as he remarked that one of the causes of the decay



of Catholicity in those districts, was the marriage of poor young ladies with heretics, he did not wish to expose them to this alternative between apostasy and poverty, and therefore opened to them an asylum at Prouille. He sometimes came to rest there a few hours, and regarded with affection that house, which flourished amid the horrors of war, like a nest of doves beside the aerie of the eagle. Seven years more thus passed over the head of Dominic without wearying that laborious servant by their toils. Meanwhile, some zealous priests had voluntarily associated themselves with him; and he himself, having reached that divergent stage of life, where he saw on one side all his youth already traversed, and on the other, the steep descent along which his remaining years should roll, he began to think of establishing an apostolic order for the defense of the Church by preaching and science. It is said that his mother, before his birth, dreamed she had been delivered of a dog, bearing in his mouth a lighted torch. This is a truthful picture of an order surpassed by none in eloquence and learning.

Dominic, confirmed in his idea, set out on

foot, in the year 1215, to make it known to the Sovereign Pontiff. So much did this great man distrust himself in the vigor of his maturity, and so necessary did he deem the benediction of the Holy See to the stability of every pious design. Innocent III. was still occupant of St. Peter's chair. He listened to the apostolic man with little approbation, and refused his sanction. But night, that divine adviser of men, brought with her better councils. As the Pontiff slept, he imagined he saw the church of St. John Lateran on the point of falling, and supported by Dominic alone, who propped with his shoulder the tottering walls. Therefore, having sent for the man of God, he bade him return to his companions in France, and settle with them on the rule they should adopt, promising to show him the utmost indulgence in his power.

Hitherto, as we have said, the religious orders had in view neither the apostleship nor divine science. They were holy republics, to which souls who hungered and thirsted after justice, repaired from every rank and station, to seek in solitude, labor, prayer, and obedience, the

exercise of virtues too pure for the world. The world descries them from afar, like those castles which the traveler in the plain catches a glimpse of on the mountain top. Rarely did the anchoret or cenobite take his staff to descend and visit mankind. St. Anthony never left but once his desert of Kolsim, and then to defend in Alexandria the Catholic faith, oppressed by the emperors. St. Bernard, after it had cost him many a groan to regulate the affairs of Europe, hastened back to Clairvaux. Dominic, chosen by God to supply the Church with soldiers of a new description, conceived the design of combining the claustral and secular life, the monk and the priest—chimerical it might have appeared; but what virtues soever you demand of men, you never need despair. Human nature is not like the Nile—the highest point of its elevation has not been yet discovered. Assuredly, St. Vincent de Paul struck out a bolder plan than St. Dominic, when he proposed that young girls should go in search of misery, and tend the sick of every age and sex by the hospital bedside; and when some one remarked in astonishment, that he did not

even give them a veil, his answer was in these simple and sublime words—"Their virtues are veil enough for them."

The order established by St. Dominic, is not therefore a monastic order, but one which combines the strength of the religious life with the energy of external action—the apostleship with personal sanctification. The salvation of souls is its prime object, instruction its chief means of action. "Go, and teach," said Christ to his Apostles; "Go, and teach," repeated Dominic. A year of spiritual novitiate is imposed on his disciples, and nine years of philosophical and theological studies are required to fit them for appearing worthily in the pulpit or the chairs of the universities. But, although preaching, and the functions of the doctor, are their especial favorites, yet no work useful to the neighbor is foreign to their vocation. In the order of St. Dominic, as in the Roman Republic, *the well being of the people is the supreme law*. For this reason, excepting the three vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, the necessary bond of every religious community, the rules of the order do not in themselves oblige under

pain of sin, and the superiors have the constant right of dispensing with them, in order that the yoke of the religious life may nowise interfere with the liberty of doing good.

A single head, under the title of *Master-general*, governs the entire order, which is distributed into provinces. Each province composed of several convents, has at its head a *Prior-provincial*, and each convent a *Prior-conventual*. The prior-conventual is elected by the brethren of the convent, subject to the approbation of the prior-provincial. The prior-provincial is elected by the priors-conventual of the province, assisted by a deputy from each convent, and his election must be confirmed by the master-general. The master-general is elected by the priors-provincial, assisted by two deputies from each province. Thus the freedom of election is modified by the necessity of the confirmations, and the authority of the hierarchy is controlled by the freedom of election. We remark also a similar composition between the principle of unity, so necessary to power, and the principle of multiplicity, so necessary on other grounds, for the chapter

general, which meets every three years, is meant as a counterpoise to the authority of the master-general, just as the provincial-chapter, meeting every two years, is intended to balance that of the prior-provincial. And, in fine, this authority, restricted as it is by election, and the chapter, is committed to the same hands for a very limited period, except in the case of the master-general, who formerly held office during life, but is now elected for six years. Such is the constitution which a Christian of the thirteenth century gave to other Christians, and indeed all our modern charters, compared to this, will appear strongly despotic. Myriads of men, scattered over the entire earth, have lived under this law for six hundred years, peaceful and united, the freest, the most laborious, and the most obedient of mortals.

The question remained, how the brethren should provide for their support; and here again the genius of Dominic displayed itself in full. If he consulted the existing religious orders, he saw them in possession of rich domains, and free from all the cares which incessantly weigh down to earth the provident soul

of the father of a family. And certainly, for monastic bodies not meant for action, we can with difficulty conceive a mode of existence excluding property. But Dominic wished to make apostles not contemplatives. He heard within him those words addressed by our Lord to his apostles, "Carry neither gold, nor silver, nor money in your girdles, nor scrip, nor purse by the way, nor two tunics, nor shoes, nor a staff, for the laborer is worthy of his hire;" and those other words—"Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all those things shall be added unto you;" and then, "The foxes have their holes, and the birds of the air their nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head;" and then of Saint Paul, "You know these hands are sufficient for me." For the Christian, and indeed for any man whose pride does not blind him, the greatest praise is that he earns his bread, that he gives in order to receive. Whoever receives without giving, is not subject to this law of love and sacrifice, by which beings are begotten, preserved, and perpetuated. On the other hand, he who gives much and receives little, like the soldier, mani-

festly does honor to humanity, because in this respect he more resembles God. To earn your livelihood, to earn it from day to day, to give in exchange for your daily bread the word and the example of the gospel, daily renewed ; such was the thought that took possession of Dominic. He also discovered another advantage in depriving himself of the common right to hold property. As long as a religious order has no fixed revenue, it is in absolute dependence on public opinion. It can exist for so long only as it is useful. It is in the pay of the people, which never pays freely for any thing but services. Does a convent fall in public esteem ? At that moment receives a death-blow without noise or revolution. Dominic, therefore, declared himself and his flock *mendicant*, in the first chapter, held in Bologna, in 1220. He relied upon the merit of his successors as well as on the justice of the Christian people, and fearlessly bequeathed to future generations this perpetual interchange of devotedness and gratitude. For two hundred and fifty years both sides continued faithful to this spirit ; on whatever side the fault lay, Pope Sixtus IV. allowed the order, toward the



close of the fifteenth century, the right of property.

Meanwhile Dominic had not yet returned to Rome to submit his constitutions to the Sovereign Pontiff for the approbation he had promised, when the latter (Innocent III. still) had occasion to write to him. Having sent for his secretary, he said to him, "Sit down and write as follows, 'To Brother Dominic and his companions.'" And then pausing a moment, he said—"No, do not style him so, but write, 'To Brother Dominic and those who preach along with him in the district of Toulouse.'" And reflecting again, he said—"Address him thus, 'To Master Dominic, and the Brothers Preachers.'" It was in this way the Holy Ghost dictated the name the new order was to bear, and so it began to be designated at Rome and elsewhere.

Finally, on the 22d December, in the year of our Lord 1216, the day after the feast of St. Thomas, the order of Friars-Preachers was approved of at Rome, in the Palace of St. Sabina, by Honorius III. in two bulls, the shorter of which runs thus: "Honorius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, to our dear son, Brother

Dominic, Prior of St. Romanus of Toulouse, and his brethren, who have made or shall make profession of the regular life, greeting and apostolical benediction. We, considering that the brethren of your order shall be the champions of the faith and true light of the world, confirm your order with all its lands and possessions actual and to come; \* and we take under our government and protection the order itself, its possessions and rights. Given at Rome, near St. Sabina, 11 Kal. of January, in the first year of our Pontificate.”

Five years afterward Dominic died, the 6th of August, 1221, leaving his order distributed into eight provinces, containing in all sixty houses. He was fifty-one years of age at his death.

Thus did the division of the three great branches of instruction take place in the Catholic Church. The bishops with their clergy continued to administer pastoral instruction, and discharge all the functions connected with it; while the religious orders became the ordinary ministers of apostolical instruction and divine

\* It was not until 1220 that St. Dominic renounced the right of property.

science, under the jurisdiction of the bishops. To the Brothers Preachers were added the Friars-Minor of St. Francis, and these were subsequently followed by others in due season. History has kept a record of their labors. Formidable heresies arose, new worlds were discovered: but whether in the regions of thought or world of waters, no mariner could penetrate farther than the learning and devotedness of the religious orders. Every coast bears a trace of their blood, the echoes of every shore have been wakened by their voice. The Indian, hunted like a wild beast, has found shelter behind their gowns; the Negro has still upon his neck the sign of their embrace; the Chinese and Japanese, separated from the rest of the world, still more by their ways of life and their pride, than by geographical position, have sat down to listen to those wondrous strangers; the Ganges has seen them communicate the divine wisdom to his Pariahs; the ruins of Babylon have lent them a stone, to rest on for a moment, and think on the ancient days, as they wiped their dewy brows. What lands or forests have they not explored. What tongue have they not spoken? what

wound of soul or body has not felt their healing hands? And while they made again and again the circuit of the world under every flag, their brethren argued in the councils and assemblies of Europe; and blending the genius of the Fathers with that of Plato and Aristotle, taking in hand the pencil and the pen, the chisel of the sculptor and the compass of the architect, they wrote of God, and framed those famous systems of theology, varied in material, and original in conception, which our own age begins to read and love. On whatever side we survey them, the religious orders have filled with their action the six last ages of the Church, and saved its power, when assailed by events which the episcopacy alone should never have been able to cope with.

But we have not history alone testifying to the necessity of the religious orders, we need only look around us to be convinced of it. At the present day, what resources has the Church of France to draw on for the preachers and doctors she requires? How rare soever the talent a young man may have received from God, is there in France a bishop able to afford him

time, the foster-father of all progress? Scarcely has he left the seminary, when the want of a livelihood throws him into a parish, where he becomes whatever he can, disquieted by the instincts of his true vocation, divided between what he does and what he should wish to do, until maturer years teach him entire resignation to the will of God, and he thinks only of the good works within his reach. If, on the other hand, he yield to his inclination, which after all is undecided, if he strike out a new path, he must enter on a career beset with difficulties. Necessity obliges him to come forward at an age far too unripe. He has no masters to form and encourage him: he is disheartened by a reverse, he provokes envy by success. Melancholy and presumption bandy him about, like a child who has no family—who now gazes at the brilliant windows of a shop, and now pauses mournfully at the corner of a street, to listen whether any one repeat his name.

How widely different is not the life of a sincere young man, who devotes his heart and his talents to God in a religious order? He is poor, but poverty shelters him from misery.

Misery is a chastisement, but poverty a blessing. He is subjected to a rule sufficiently stern for the body, but he obtains, in compensation, a great freedom of soul. He has masters who have gone before him in the career, and are no rivals. He comes forward in proper season, when his intellect is ripened, without having as yet lost the exuberance of youth. His reverses are met with consolation, and his success preserved from pride, which is the blight of glory. His life flows on like a river, in love with its banks, and tranquil in its course. How often, during the tempestuous years gone by, have we not tenanted in spirit those powerful fortresses which have stilled so many passions and protected so many lives. Now that we have passed the days of tempest, it is more for others than ourselves we prepare an asylum. Our existence is complete; we have reached the shore. Those whom we have left on the high seas, with winds less favorable than our own, can understand our wishes, and will, perhaps, respond to them.

If we be asked why we have chosen the order of Preachers, we shall make answer—it is the

one most in harmony with our nature, our mind, and our views. With our nature, by its government; our mind, by its doctrines; our object, by its means of action, which are principally preaching and divine science. We do not, all the while, intend that our choice should imply a reproach on any other order. We esteem all; and we have present to our mind the letter written by Clement IV. to a gentleman who consulted him as to whether he should enter the order of Preachers, or that of Friars-Minor:—“Clement, bishop, servant of the servants of God, to our dear son —— knight, greeting and apostolic benediction. You ask of us an advice which you might well have drawn from your own breast. For if the Lord has inspired you to leave the world for a better course of life, we do not wish to throw an obstacle in the way of his spirit, more especially as you have a son well instructed, who will support you house. If, therefore, adhering to your purpose, you inquire of us which of the two orders, of Preachers or Friars-Minor, you should choose, we leave the question to your own conscience. For you can yourself ascertain the observances of

both orders, which are not equal in all respects, but surpass each other in diverse matters. And, truly, in one of these orders the bed is harder, the scantiness of clothing more painful, and, in the opinion of some, the poverty more absolute; while in the other the fare is more frugal, the fasts longer, and, as many are convinced, the discipline more saintly. We therefore love neither in preference to the other; but, founded as they both are on rigid poverty, we believe they have only one end in view, the salvation of souls. This being so, embrace which you will, and you shall take the narrow way, and enter by the narrow gate, which leads to the land of honey and freedom. Weigh the matter, therefore, attentively, and carefully examine which of the two best meets your ideas, and in which you hope to succeed best, and attach yourself to it, yet so as not to lose your affection for the other; for the Friar-Preacher who does not love the Minors is execrable; and the Minor who hates or despises the Brothers-Preachers is execrable and damnable. Given at Perugia, the 13th Kalend of May, in the second year of our Pontificate."



These sentiments of Pope Clement are our own. We have chosen the order which “best meets our ideas, and in which we hope to succeed best.” Still, without denying to any other the love and reverence we owe to all.

We shall be asked, too, perhaps, why we have preferred receiving an old order, to establishing a new one. We have two things to put forward in reply :—First, the grace of founding a new order is one of the rarest conferred by God upon his saints. We have it not. In the second place, were God to give us the power to establish a new order, we feel sure, that after all due reflection we could discover nothing newer, nothing more suitable to our time and its wants than the rule of Saint Dominic. It is ancient, not antiquated, and we can not see the necessity of putting our ingenuity upon the rack for the sole pleasure of dating from yesterday. Saint Dominic, Saint Francis of Assisium, and Saint Ignatius, when they employed the religious institute for the propagation of the Gospel by means of teaching, exhausted all the fundamental combinations of this change. You may alter the dress and the name, but you can not change

the real nature of these three celebrated societies. If the history of the Preachers is open to objection from our contemporaries, the same may be said of the history of the universal Church. You can not pass through two epochs unassailed by all kinds of objections. That which passes away always takes what is permanent to task for an infinitude of things, in a way that can best be met by the latter continuing to endure. For you can keep in existence only in virtue of those silent modifications which leave the past to the past, and descend to the future by their conformity with the present. The Church and religious orders are in the same state as living bodies which preserve their identity, notwithstanding the constant operation of a process whereby they are constantly renewed. The Church of to-day is exactly the same as that of the middle ages, in hierarchy, dogma, worship, and morality. And yet how different in other respects! This same holds with regard to the religious orders, and more particularly the Preachers. To reproach any one with the past is to reproach a man with his cradle, life with life.

## CHAPTER III.

LABORS OF THE BRETHREN AS PREACHERS—  
THEIR MISSIONS IN THE OLD AND NEW  
WORLDS

ELOQUENCE being the most arduous of arts, and preaching the most exalted species of eloquence, is it not a kind of phenomenon to see a single man create an army of preachers, such as to throw the world into commotion, from Muscovy to Spain, from Sweden to Persia? To account for this wonderful fact, it is enough to bring to mind that eloquence is the daughter of passion. Create a passion in a soul, and eloquence will gush from it in torrents ; eloquence is the sound that issues from an impassioned soul. Thus, during times of public agitation, when the people, swayed by strong emotions, and great interests are at stake, orators come to the surface in crowds. Whoever, in his life, passionately loved any thing, has unquestionably been eloquent, were it only for once. Saint Dominic, therefore, to bring to the world

legions of preachers, had no occasion to establish schools of rhetoric. It was enough for him to have reached the heart of the age he lived in, and to have found or created a passion there. In the thirteenth century, faith was deep-seated; and the Church still reigned over the society she had conquered for herself. Meanwhile, the reasoning faculty in Europe, slowly matured by time and Christianity, was approaching the critical stage of youth. What Innocent III. had seen in his dream, namely, the tottering condition of the Church, Saint Dominic disclosed to the world; and, while the entire earth looked upon the Church as queen and mistress, he declared that nothing short of the resurrection of the primitive apostleship was requisite to save her. Dominic met the same answer as Peter the Hermit, and people became Friars-Preachers, as they formerly became Crusaders. Every university of Europe furnished its contingent of masters and scholars. Brother Jordan, of Saxony, second general of the order, admitted (himself in person) more than a thousand men to the habit of the order. Speaking of him, men have said to their neighbors, "Do not go to the

sermons of Brother Jordan, for he is like a courtesan, seducing men." In a moment, or to speak literally (for in these matters the truth outdoes the figure), in two years, Saint Dominic, who before the bull of Honorius had only sixteen fellow-laborers—eight French, seven Spaniards, and one Englishman—founded sixty convents, peopled with distinguished men, and a band of flourishing youth.

How could speech flow coldly from the lips of those men, whom the one idea of the ancient apostleship had agitated and brought together? How could those men of learning, who abandoned their professional chairs to enter as novices an order without fame or fortune, fail to find words in accord with their devotedness? Was the youth of the universities, which had flung itself, without a second look, into this chivalry of the Gospel, likely to lose under the cassock, the ardor of its years, the impetuosity of its convictions? When once generous souls, scattered and hidden in the wildernesses of an age, meet and learn to know each other, they throw into their effusion that strength which has drawn them from their repose. Such souls are always

in existence. Humanity always contains them in her mighty womb, a glorious antidote to the degradation which ferments within her; and according as one element or the other prevails in the world, an epoch is glorious or the reverse. Now, Saint Dominic turned the scale in favor of magnanimity; his disciples were nothing else than the good element of humanity in those times, obtaining a sudden triumph. All, like their master, at a period when the Church was rich, insisted on being poor, and poor even to mendicancy. All, like him, at a moment when the Church reigned paramount, would have no influence that did not proceed from the voluntary submission of men's minds to their virtues. They did not say, with the heretics, the Church must be stripped, but they stripped it in their own persons, and exhibited it in its primitive garb. In a word, they loved God; they loved him truly, they loved him above all things; they loved their neighbor as themselves, and more than themselves; they had all received that deep wound in the breast which makes a saint eloquent.

Besides this merit of an impassioned soul, with-

out which an orator never existed, they had, moreover, a great facility in acquiring the precise description of preaching that suited the time.

Truth is, doubtless, one; and in heaven her language is uniform, like herself. But here below, she speaks in different strains, according to the disposition of the mind. She has to convince. She speaks differently to the child and to the man, to the barbarous and to the civilized, to the rationalist and to the man of faith. The better to understand the reason of this, we must be careful to observe, that there are two principal situations, in one of which the understanding abandons truth; in the other it still clings to truth, however feebly. These two vary in different minds. Nevertheless, at every characteristic epoch in the life of men or nations, the intellect swerves from and approaches truth under pretty nearly the same circumstances. Men and nations are borne away by a common impulse, and have to pass through the same revolution. In like manner, therefore, as the navigator must know the varying position of the earth relatively to the heavens, so must he whose mission is to diffuse the truth, be able to say which is the pole in the in-

telleet of man exhibiting attraction toward God, and which exhibiting repulsion. He must know what is the particular bent of each individual in this situation common to all.

After having touched upon the causes to which the success of the Preachers in their apostolic labors is attributable, I should wish to give some idea of the immensity of those labors. To detail them one by one would be impossible ; an address is not a history. I shall, therefore, confine myself to presenting the outline or circumference, as a traveler who wishes to judge by eyesight the extent of a country, endeavors to take in from any eminence the most remote horizon upon all sides.

The apostleship of the Friars-Preachers has two horizons. The one stretches to the confines of the old world, the other advances with the discovery of America to the utmost limits of the new. The period when the first of these vanishes and the second begins, divides their duration into two equal phases, each of full three hundred years.

During the first period, from the beginning of the thirteenth to the beginning of the sixteenth



century, the great lines which bounded the arena of the Preachers' labors were as follows :—To the South, their missions among the Moors and Arabs, possessors of a large portion of Spain, masters of Africa, threatening Europe with their arms, and corrupting her by the infiltration of Islamism. To the East, their missions among the Greeks, separated from the Church by a schism, not then considered hopeless; and among the Tartars, who, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, kept Europe in alarm by the noise of their expeditions: To the East, again, we have the missions of Persia, Armenia, the shores of the Black Sea, and the Danube. To the North were the missions of Ireland, Scotland, Denmark, Sweden, Prussia, Poland, and the Russias; countries to which the true faith had been carried, but which, more or less recently converted, still retained a multitude of infidels, and a confused jumble of their former errors. Even Greenland saw the Friars-Preachers aboard the first vessels borne to her shores, and the Dutch were astonished to find there, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, a Dominican convent, the establishment of which went back to the middle

ages, and whose existence Captain Nicholas Zain had already noticed in 1380. The number of missionaries maintained by the Brothers-Preachers in these various countries during the three centuries in question, goes beyond all conception.

Innocent IV. wrote to them in these terms, July 23, 1253: "To our dear sons the Brothers-Preachers, now preaching in the countries of the Saracens, Greeks, Bulgarians, Ethiopians, Cumarians, Syrians, Goths, Jacobites, Armenians, Indians, Tartars, Hungarians, and other infidel nations of the East, greeting and apostolic benediction, &c."

It was found necessary to create in the order a special congregation of "Travelers for Jesus Christ to the Infidels;" and Pope John XXII. having, in 1325, given all the brethren a general permission to make part of it, they offered themselves in such multitudes, that the Sovereign Pontiff could not command his astonishment, and was compelled, through fear of depopulating the convents of Europe, to restrict the previously unlimited permission. It was a renewal of the spectacle presented by the general chapter held at Paris in 1222, when the blessed Jordan of Sax

ony, having asked his brethren which of them would be willing to proceed upon the foreign missions, they, every one, with the exception of some old men broken down by years, fell at his feet exclaiming with tears, "Father, send me."

You need only run through the chronicles of the order to meet every moment similar evidences of a prodigious activity and devotedness. And these apostles, sent forth to all the nations then known, were not only men of ardent faith, but men of learning, familiar with the tongues, the manners, and the religions of the nations they went to evangelize. Saint Raymond of Pennafort, one of the first masters-general of the order, founded in concert with the kings of Aragon and Castile, two colleges at Murcia and Tunis, for the study of Eastern languages. St. Thomas of Aquinas, at the invitation of the same master-general, wrote his celebrated "Summa in Gentes." Brother Accoldi of Florence published a treatise on the errors of the Arabs, in their own language, and Brother Raymond Martin a special Summa against the Koran.

The transition from the cloister to the expedition, and from the expedition to the cloister,

imparted to the Friar-Preacher a peculiar and wonderful characteristic. Learned, solitary, and adventurous, he bore in his entire person the stamp of a man who has seen every thing that can be seen regarding God, and every thing regarding man. The brother you might chance to meet any day on the highways of your own country, had already been among the tents of the Tartars beside the rivers of Upper Asia; he had lived in a convent of Armenia at the foot of Mount Ararat; had preached in the capital of Fez or Morocco, and was now going to Scandinavia, thence perhaps into Red Russia. He had many a bead to tell before his journey's end. If, like the eunuch in the Acts of the Apostles, you gave him occasion to speak to you of God, his heart, formed in solitude, would open as an abyss before you the treasury of things, old and new, to use the words of Scripture; and that certain inimitable eloquence of his coming upon your soul from his own, would make you feel that the greatest happiness man can know in this world is to meet, even once in this life, a real man of God. Rarely did these traveling brethren, as they were called, return to die in the pa-

rent convent which had received their first tears of love. Many, worn out with fatigues, slept far from their brethren; many found their end by martyrdom—for the Tartars, Arabs, and men of the North were not the most tractable disciples, and every brother before setting out made the sacrifice of his life. Even in the midst of Christendom a bloody death was often their lot, so powerful were the heresies and passions they there combated with all their might.

If we be asked the names of those preachers who filled three centuries with their eloquence, we can not enumerate them. They exist in the tomb of chronicles, but to repeat their names is not to revive them. Such is the fate of the orator. The man who has ravished the living generation, descends to the same silence with them. In vain does posterity endeavor to hear his words and those of the people who applauded him; both have vanished into time, as sound dies away into space. The orator and his audience are twins, born and dying on the same day; and you may apply to the entire destiny which connects them, the deep observation of Cicero—there exists no great orator without a multitude to hear him.

Nevertheless, I shall mention a few, whose names are best preserved from oblivion.

Among them we have St. Hyacinth, who preached Christ Jesus in Poland, Bohemia, Great and Little Russia, Livonia, Sweden, Denmark, along the shores of the Black Sea, in the islands of the Grecian Archipelago, and by the coast of Asia Minor. His progress may be traced in the convents he founded as he passed.

We see also St. Peter of Verona, who fell beneath the swords of assassins after a long apostolic career, and wrote with his blood upon the sand the first words of the Apostles' Creed, "I believe in God."

To these we shall add Henry Suso in the fourteenth century, that amiable youth of Suabia, whose preaching was so successful that a price was set upon his head. Treated as an innovator, a heretic, a visionary, a man of infamous character, when he was invited to prosecute his assailants criminally, he replied: "I should follow your advice if this ill-usage of the preacher were hurtful to his preaching."

At the same period Brother John Taulerus won applause in Cologne and all Germany; but

after having shone in the pulpit many years, he suddenly retreated to his cell, leaving the people astonished at his disappearance. The fact was, an unknown man accosted him after one of his discourses, and asked permission to speak his mind regarding him. Taulerus having given it, the unknown replied: "There lives in your heart a secret pride—you rely on your great learning and your title of doctor; nor do you seek God with a pure intention, or his glory only in the study of letters—you seek yourself in the passing applause of creatures. Therefore the wine of heavenly doctrine, and the divine word, though pure and excellent in themselves, lose their strength when passing through your heart, and drop without savor or grace into the breast that loves God."\* Taulerus was magnanimous enough to listen to these words, and assuredly no one would have ventured so to address him did he not deserve them. He kept silence. The vanity of his present life was apparent to him. Withdrawn from all commerce with the world, he abstained for two years from

\* Life of the Sublime and Illuminated Doctor Taulerus, by Darius, B. D.

preaching or hearing confessions, night and day an assiduous attendant at every conventual exercise, and passing the remainder of his time in his cell deploring his sins and studying Jesus Christ. After two years Cologne learned that Doctor Taulerus was to preach once more. The entire city repaired to the church, curious to penetrate the mystery of a retirement which had been variously explained. But when he mounted the pulpit, after vain struggles to speak, tears were the only thing he could bring from his heart; he was now not merely an orator—he was a saint.

I shall add one other name, that of St. Vincent Ferrer, who evangelized Spain, France, Italy, Germany, England, Scotland, and Ireland, reaching so high a degree of estimation, that he was chosen among the arbitrators who were to decide the succession to the throne of Aragon; and the Council of Constance sent deputies to invite him to take part in its deliberations. And then Jerome Savonarola, that constant friend of the French in Italy, the idol of Florence, whose liberties he defended, and whose morals he would fain have reformed. In vain



was he burned alive amid an ungrateful people. In vain, I say, for his virtues and glory rose higher than the blaze of the pile. Pope Paul III. declared that he would hold any man suspected of heresy who should dare impute it to Savonarola; and St. Philip Neri always kept in his room an image of that great man.

Toward the end of the fifteenth century a new theater opened to the ambition of the preachers by the discovery of the two Indies; nor must we forget the fact, that half the credit of this discovery is due to them; for after Christopher Columbus had met with a repulse in the courts of Portugal, England, and Castile, it was a Dominican, Brother Diego Deza, preceptor of the Infanta Don Juan of Castile, and confessor of Ferdinand the Catholic, who confirmed in his purpose the illustrious Genoese, and promised him success.

Scarce had the report of these new worlds met the ear of Europe, when a crowd of apostolic men rushed forth to follow wherever the conquerors should lead.

In 1503, two Friars-Preachers set out for the East Indies.

In 1510, two others reached the island of St. Domingo.

In 1513, Brother Thomas Ortir founded at Mexico the first Dominican convent.

In 1526, twelve Brothers-Preachers scattered themselves over New Spain, and established there a hundred houses and convents.

In 1529, fourteen Friars-Preachers repaired to Peru, having with them the famous Bartholomew de Las Casas, who had taken the habit of St. Dominic.

In 1540, there were in New Grenada thirteen convents, and sixty houses with churches attached.

In 1541, Chili possessed forty houses and convents.

In 1542, the Floridas were evangelized by Brother Louis Canceri.

In 1549, we reckon in the peninsula of Malacca and the neighboring islands, eighteen convents, and sixty thousand Christians.

In 1550, the Dominicans founded a university in Lima.

In 1556, they entered the kingdom of Siam, and Brother Gaspard of the Cross had the glory

of setting foot in China, where no missionary had preceded him.

In 1575, Brother Michael Bénavidès also penetrated to China with two companions, and built there the first Catholic church, under the invocation of the Archangel Gabriel. He composed a work on the Chinese language, and established a school for the education of children in the Christian religion.

In 1576, twenty-five brothers set out for the Philippine Isles; one of them, Brother Dominic Salazar, became the first bishop.

In 1584, the Dominicans evangelized the island of Mozambique and the eastern coast of Africa.

In 1602, they had a house in Japan.

In 1616, they established a university in the Manillas.\*

All these missions, and many others it would be wearisome to enumerate, were fertilized by blood, the purest and most generous. The two worlds seemed to vie in shedding Dominican blood. In Europe, the Protestants made it flow

\* These facts and dates are taken from the *Monumenta Dominicana* of Father Vincent Mary Fontana.

in torrents; while America, Asia, and Africa poured it out a libation to their various errors. Never did the order of St. Dominic present so grand a spectacle. Could you, like God, see it from an eminence, and take in all its labors at a single glance, you should not be able to conceive how so small a number could speak so many tongues, occupy so many places, direct so many affairs, and give so much blood. But what raised their glory to the highest was the courageous resistance they offered to the oppressors of the native Americans. That tranquil land, which had welcomed with so much simplicity the European ships, was soon inundated by a race of men, calling themselves Spaniards and Christians, but whose word no man could trust. They treated America and its inhabitants as a tiger would his prey. Four strokes of a pen upon the map, gave to the first comer a piece of American territory, and all the Indians, its owners. Their ownership was made the ground of their servitude, if that can be called servitude in which the life of the slave went for nothing, so little was it spared. The conquerors believed they had discovered

inexhaustible stores of men and gold. They killed an Indian without minding it. When they found their numbers on the decrease, they set out to hunt them with packs of hounds. The Indian, in his freedom, was looked upon as game; the slave was not even considered a domestic animal. At length something like remorse began to touch their consciences. It occurred to them they might one day have to justify their conduct, and they therefore wrote the apologetic theory of their actions. According to them, Almighty God, Master of heaven and earth, had given them America in consequence of the superiority of the Spaniards over the Indians. Moreover, this superiority had been given them by Jesus Christ in baptism; and if it were objected to them, that they had only to baptize the Indians, the answer was in readiness—to be baptized you must needs first be a man.\*

\* Justice to the Spanish nation requires us here to call attention to the fact that the home government of Spain was always actuated by principles of strict justice and humanity to the Indians; these principles were embodied in the laws enacted in various reigns for the government of the colonies, as is evidenced in the very appointment of Las Casas as Protector-General of the Indians. If they were not always

The question now was, whether no one could be found to come forward in the name of justice, in that unfortunate land; whether no one would advance to vindicate Europe and religion. This glory was reserved for the order of Dominic. All its missionaries, without exception, took up the cause of the Indian with heroic intrepidity. They attacked their oppressors from the pulpit, in writing, before the Council of Castile, before the Holy See. They put in action every means then available, to create opinion and crush tyranny. In 1537, Brother Julian, bishop of Tlascala, and Brother Dominic Betanzos, prior of the province, established in a treatise the right of the Indians to liberty, property, and Christianity, and sent it by a deputation to Pope Paul III., praying him to issue a decree, confirming the doctrine they had laid down. Paul did not allow delay to

carried out it was owing to circumstances of time and place over which the government of Spain could seldom exercise an effectual control. There is no denying, however, that these laws put a salutary restraint upon cruelty, which in all parts of the New World seems to have been exercised without much remorse; and which, in the States of North America, has almost extinguished in blood the flickering remnant of Indian life.—EDITOR.

hang on his decision. He solemnly declared that the Indians were men capable of receiving the Christian Faith, entitled to the Sacraments of the Church, and not to be deprived of their liberty and fortunes without injustice. Many of the order of Preachers then acquired a venerated name. But one of these outshines all the others, and embodies, in his immortal memory, the glory of them all.

Bartholomew de Las Casas, a gentleman of Seville, emigrated to America in 1502, at the age of twenty-eight. He had scarce set foot there, when his bowels were moved with compassion and horror at the spectacle which met his eyes. Instead of advancing his fortune, he determined to consecrate his life to the defense of America; and, as a preparation, had himself initiated by the reception of the priesthood, in the profoundest mysteries of the redemption of the world. To the age of sixty-seven, as long as any strength upheld him, he ceased not to labor in this holy cause. Eight times was he seen to cross the ocean from America to the court of Spain, and from Spain to America, bearing with him complaints, and bringing back

empty decrees. He was heard to exclaim, in presence of a council bent on universal monarchy, "All nations are equally free, and none have a right to encroach on the liberties of others." He had the boldness to present to Charles V. a memorial, under the title of "Destruction of the Indies by the Spaniards," in which he set forth the crimes of his countrymen in a style of cutting truth, thus sacrificing to justice his personal safety and the honor of his nation. Charles was sufficiently high-minded to name him "Protector-General of the Indies;" but this pompous title, notwithstanding the extensive powers annexed to it, only served to show him how little good is left in the power of a prince when he is exclusively devoted to ambition, and justice is a mere accident of his conscience. Once, in the midst of his labors, Las Casas looked sorrowfully into himself and the age he lived in, and feeling that alone he was unable to carry the weight of his own heart, he put on, at the age of forty-eight, the habit of Saint Dominic, as that which then covered all that was generous on earth. From this he seemed to draw new strength and new virtues; and his seventieth year beheld him



a suppliant at the court of Spain on behalf of the Indians. This was not all. The old man, grown white in the apostleship, who had when younger refused the bishopric of Cusco, believed that now the episcopal office would suit his age, as a staff befits the traveler worn out with years and weariness. He accepted the bishopric of Chiapa, and the ocean bore him once more to the succor of America. This was the last time. Whether it was owing to the tenderness with which a man of seventy-seven yearns for the land of his infancy, or that he could not endure upon his death-bed the last groans of the Indian population, mown down by half a century of barbarity, he wished to die in Spain. But while his venerated country regarded him as a sublime light upon the point of dying out, as a relic which death had not yet quite consecrated, drawing new life from charity, he gained fifteen years of admirable old age. His voice, almost centenary, was heard once more in the Council of Castile on behalf of the Indians; and his hand, which men thought palsied by age, wrote the celebrated treatise on "The Tyranny of the Spaniards in the Indies." At length, full of

days, mature in virtue and in glory, victorious over all his detractors, he died, at the age of ninety-two, in the convent of his Order at Valladolid, leaving to posterity a religious and venerated name.

Spanish America has shown herself sensible to all those pious recollections. She has not forgotten those who were her friends, her fathers, her guardians, her apostles, the martyrs of her rights. Twenty revolutions have convulsed her, from the Straits of Magellan to the Gulf of California; her ancient sovereigns, who pompously styled themselves Kings of Spain and the Indies, have been driven from all their transatlantic dominions; but the humble brother of St. Dominic and St. Francis, prays tranquilly in that grateful country, with no apprehension from the past, and nothing to dread from the future. The Catholic Church, which had been faithful to these unhappy regions in the days of their oppression, continued faithful to them in the days of their liberty; and, in spite of the remonstrances of the Spanish court, has continued to provide for the succession of their hierarchy. This has been one of the illustrious

actions of the reigning Pontiff, Gregory XVI.—that august old man who in so short a lapse of years, has acquired in the Christian heart the glory of ages, a memory which has already the grandeur of centuries. America, on her side, has given to the Church and the religious orders new marks of inviolable attachment; she has proclaimed in her charters the eternal rights of religion; and lately, when Spain had broken down the gates of her monasteries, coeval with her own nationality, Mexico sent orders to her consuls, to offer an asylum to the religious in dispersion. They were to receive three hundred crowns for their expenses, a free passage on board the vessels of the state, and a pension while traveling, subject to the noble and Christian condition of their laboring in the missions. Many have actually taken advantage of these generous offers, and repairing from diverse points of Italy to the port of Genoa, have embarked to seek in Mexico the foot-prints of their glorious ancestors. Thus, while most of the European monarchies persecute the religious orders, or churlishly deny them fire and water, the republics of the New World pay down their

gold to bring them over. "Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity, save only to love the Lord, and serve him alone."

## CHAPTER IV.

LABORS OF THE FRIAR-PREACHERS AS DOCTORS.

—ST. THOMAS AQUINAS.

AT the western extremity of Bologna, where the last slopes of the Apennines terminate at the outskirts of the city, the traveler finds a church in a solitary quarter. I entered that church with the emotion of a man who feels a tender anxiety to see some certain thing. Accustomed as I had been to the gigantic tombs of modern art, I was touched by the sweet monument I saw before me. There, beneath that alabaster of such purity, reposes the body of St. Dominic, near the famous university of Bologna, equaled only by the university of Paris—both much beloved by the Saint, both chosen by him for the principal sojourn of his children. The grateful university of Paris gave him a portion of the convent of St. James; from Bologna he received his tomb. It was fitting, indeed, that a learned city should be the last and final resting-place on

earth of the wondrous man who had combined in one idea the apostleship and divine science, and intrusted to the one order their twofold mission. The event justified the boldness of the enterprise, and proved beyond question its inspiration from above. We have already seen how successfully the order met the hopes of its holy patriarch in the apostleship; we shall now witness a success in the regions of science, altogether differently miraculous. For, after all, devotedness is enough to give the missionary his impulse—but science demands, in addition to devotedness, a degree of intelligence always very rare.

Science is the study of the relations which constitute and connect all beings, from God even to the atom, from infinite greatness to infinite littleness. Every step of this vast ladder throws light upon the preceding and succeeding step; because every relation, once penetrated, from whatever quarter, from below upward, or from above downward, is a revelation of some certain existence. In other words, the effect indicates the cause, being, as it is, its image; the cause explains the effect, inasmuch as it is its princi-

ple. Nevertheless, this reciprocity is not equal. The true light comes only from above, that which proceeds from below is merely a reflection. "Now," says St. Paul, "we see as in a mirror and an enigma; one day we shall see him face to face."

Science, therefore, in our present state, is necessarily imperfect, because we do not see, face to face, the starting point and the goal, both of which God is. But, veiled as he is from our view, we are not without other means of knowing him, independently of the reflection of himself found in inferior beings. Before showing himself, God has made affirmation; before appearing, he has declared his name. The voluntary reception of this sovereign word is called faith. Once in possession of this new element of knowledge, having once gained this eminence, and its commanding view, the Christian must descend to the lowest extremities of the universe, interpret from the relations which constitute the divine essence, those which belong to the things of man and nature; and then, by reversing the direction of his inquiries, verify the laws of infinite existence by those of finite beings. This

comparison of two worlds—the illumination of the second, which is the effect, by the first which is the cause; this confirmation of the first, or cause, by the second, or effect; this ebb and flow of light, this tide which comes from the ocean to the shore, and retires from the shore to the ocean; faith abiding in science, and science abiding in faith—such is the theology of the Christian.

Hence it follows, that to find the perfection of a Catholic doctor is almost impossible. For, on the one side, he must be in possession of the entire deposit of faith, the Scriptures, tradition, written and oral, the councils and acts of the Papacy. On the other hand, he must be acquainted with what St. Paul calls “the elements of the world,” that is to say, all and every thing. Open the first of the fathers you lay your hand on—the “Evangelical Preparation” of St. Eusebius, the “Explanation of the Six Days’ Work” of St. Basil, the “Tapestries” of Clement of Alexandria; the “City of God,” of St. Augustine; we shall see them every one pass in a moment from heaven to earth, then from discovery to revelation, mingling and blending



God with the universe, to draw thence the science of both. Still, no one of them succeeded in rearing the entire structure of theology. After the labors of twelve hundred years, their writings might be likened to the ruins of a temple left unfinished, but sublime in ruin, and awaiting with the patience of immortality the hand of the architect. This architect was to spring from the ashes of St. Dominic; and what no one could have foreseen, the man of Providence in this incomparable work was a nobleman of high rank.

There lived at Cologne, in the year 1245, a Dominican licentiate, so remarkable a genius that his age bestowed on him the name of "Great." Although more particularly versed in mathematics, physics, and medicine, he then taught theology, and after having been advanced by it to the highest dignity, he voluntarily resigned them all to return to his schools. The close of his career was extraordinary. One day, as he was lecturing in public, he suddenly stopped short, like a man in painful quest of an idea, and after a silence of some moments, which amazed and troubled every one, he resumed

thus:—"When I was young I had so much difficulty to learn, that I despaired of ever knowing any thing; and for that reason determined on quitting the order of St. Dominic, that I might spare myself the shame of being continually in contrast with men of learning. While I continued to dwell upon this project, night and day, I imagined I saw in a dream the Mother of God, and that she inquired of me in what science I should like to become a proficient; whether in theology, or the knowledge of nature. I replied, in the knowledge of nature. She then said, 'You shall be gratified in your desire, and become the greatest of philosophers; but since you have not chosen the science of my Son, a day will come, when losing this very science of Nature, you shall find yourself even as you are to-day.' Now, my children the day foretold has come. Henceforward, I shall teach you no more; but I declare before you, for the last time, that I believe in all the articles of the creed, and I beg that the last sacraments of the Church may be brought me when my hour shall be at hand. If I have said or written any thing contrary to faith, I retract it, and submit all my doctrines to my

holy mother, the Church." Having so spoken, he left the chair, and his disciples embracing him, with tears, brought him back to his house, where he lived for three years in the utmost simplicity; even he who had been called the "miracle of nature, the prodigy of his age," and to whom posterity decreed the name of Albert the Great.

But Albertus Magnus was not the man chosen to rear the edifice of Catholic theology. He had "preferred the science of nature to that of the Son of God."

Toward the end of 1244, or the beginning of 1245, John the Teutonic, fourth master-general of the order of Preachers, came to Cologne, accompanied by a young Neapolitan, whom he presented to brother Albert as a future disciple. In those days Europe was a land of liberty, and nations held out the hand to each other in the universities. You might go for instruction where you thought proper. The young man whom John the Teutonic had just brought to the school of Albertus Magnus, was, on the father's side, great grandson of the Emperor Frederick I., cousin of the Emperor Henry VI., second cousin of the reigning Emperor Frederick II.

and by his mother he was descended from the Norman princes, who had expelled the Arabs and Greeks from Italy, and conquered the two Sicilies. He was only seventeen years of age. It is told of him that his parents carried him away and placed him in a strong castle, in order to make him abandon his devotion, but without success. He pursued, it is said, with a brand from the fire, a woman who had been introduced into his apartment; and gained his two sisters to the religious life during the very conversation by which they hoped to dissuade him from it; and Pope Innocent IV., who had been asked to break the bonds which held him to the order of Saint Dominic, listened to him with admiration, and offered to him the Abbey of Mount Cassino. Preceded by such reports, the young Count of Aquinas—now simply Brother Thomas—was in great consideration with his fellow-students. But nothing in him met their expectations. He was a plain young man, who spoke little, and whose very eyes seemed dull. At length they came to believe he had nothing exalted about him but his birth, and he was called in mockery, the “great dull ox of Sicily.” His master, Al-

bert, himself, not knowing what to think of him, took occasion one day to question him upon some knotty points. The disciple answered with an apprehension and judgment so marvelous, that Albert felt the joy which a superior man alone can feel, when he meets another man destined to equal, or perhaps surpass himself. He turned with emotion to the assembled youth, and said—"We call Brother Thomas a dumb ox, but the world will one day re-echo to the bellowing of his doctrine."

The fulfillment of the prophecy was not long delayed; Thomas of Aquinas became in a short time, the most illustrious doctor of the Catholic Church, and his birth itself, royal as it was, disappears in the magnificence of his personal renown.

At the age of forty-one years, and when he had nine more to live, Saint Thomas thought of the design which was the goal, as yet unknown, of his destiny. He proposed to himself to bring together the scattered materials of theology; and out of what you might expect to find a mere compilation, he constructed a master-piece, of which everybody speaks, even those who have

not read it, as every one speaks of the pyramids, which scarce any one sees.

Theology is, as we have said, the science of the divine affirmations. When man simply accepts these affirmations he is in the state of faith. When he establishes the connection of these affirmations with each other, and with all the internal and external facts of the universe, his faith is of the theological or scientific kind. Consequently theology results from the combination of the human with a divine element ; but if this combination enlighten faith, it is, nevertheless, subject to great danger. For, give yourself a little scope in the order of visible things, and you will soon have reached the extreme limit of certainty belonging to them. And if you go a little farther, the mind brings back from these ill-explored regions little else than opinions calculated, in some instances, to damage the purity and solidity of its faith. One of the prime qualities, therefore, in a Catholic doctor, is discernment in the use of the human element. Now this tact was found in St. Thomas to an eminent degree.

Up to his time, all human science was confined to the writings of Aristotle—logic, meta-

physics, morality, physics, politics, natural history. Aristotle taught every thing, and was looked upon as having pronounced the final decree of nature upon every subject. Nevertheless, it was enough to run through one or two of his works, to remark how little he had of the genius of Christianity. Already the reading of his works had begun to bear fruits of bitterness. It was not unusual, for instance, to hear a master in arts maintain that a proposition was true, according to the Gospel, and false, according to the "philosophers." In 1277, Stephen II., archbishop of Paris, found it necessary to censure two hundred and twenty-two articles, for errors contained in the writings of Aristotle. Such were the scientific elements with which St. Thomas had to deal; but from these he had to create a psychology, an ontology, a political and moral system, worthy of entering into combination with the dogmas of the faith. St. Thomas did all this. Putting aside the chimeras and aberrations of the Stagyrite, he drew from his writings all the truth it was possible to glean, he transformed and sublimed his materials, and without either prostrating or adoring the idol of his age, he

opened up a philosophy which had still the blood of Aristotle in its veins, but mingled with and purified by his own, and that of his great predecessors in doctrine.

To this discernment in the use of the human finite element, St. Thomas united a penetrating insight into the divine. In contemplating the mysteries of God, he had the steadfast gaze we see in the eagle of St. John ; that expression of eye so difficult to define, but which you understand so well when, after having meditated on some truth of Christianity, you meet with a man who has gone deeper than you, or better understood the voice of infinitude. A great theologian has many things in common with a great artist. Both of them see what escapes the vulgar eye ; both of them hear what escapes the vulgar ear ; and when, with the feeble organs on which men have to rely, they catch a reflection or a sound of what they have seen and heard, they give it to the world with a life and truthfulness, that bespeak superior genius. This faculty of exploring the infinite, will astonish those who believe a mystery to be an affirmation of which even the terms are not clearly understood ; but



those who know the incomprehensible to be boundless light which, even on the day of our seeing God face to face, we shall not be able fully to penetrate, will easily conceive that the more immense the horizon, the greater is the scope for the excursive gaze. Theology has this rare advantage, that the divine affirmations which disclose infinitude from time to time, are at once a compass on the sea. The Word of God forms in infinitude lines that may be traced, that circumscribe the intellect without confining it, and bear you along with them even while they fly before you. Never shall man, entangled in the meshes and immersed in the darkness of the finite, understand the happiness of the theologian, swimming in the boundless space of truth, and finding in the bounds, which keep him in, the immensity by which he is ravished. This union, at one and the same moment of the most perfect security and the boldest flight, causes the soul an inexpressible joy, which makes him who has once felt it, despise all else. To no one are you more often indebted for this feeling than to St. Thomas. After having studied a question even in the works of great men, recur to him,

and you feel that you have traversed worlds in a bound, and thought is no longer a burden.

We ought to speak of the force that bound together the divine and human element in those writings, always keeping the second in subordination to the first. We ought to speak of that powerful spirit of unity which in the course of so enormous a work, never once fails, but catches up, right and left, all waters of earth and heaven, and drives them onward by a movement as of a mighty spring, increasing their current without changing it. We ought, in fine, to give some idea of a style which makes truth perceptible in her profoundest depths, as you see the fish beneath the waters of a limpid lake, or the stars in a pure sky ; a style as calm as it is transparent, in which imagination is as little seen as passion, and which, notwithstanding, charms the understanding. But time presses ; and, besides, St. Thomas has no need of praise. Sovereign Pontiffs, councils, religious orders, universities, a thousand writers, in a word, have exalted him beyond the reach of praise from us. When the ambassadors of Naples came to solicit his canonization from John XXII., the Pope, who re-

ceived them in full consistory, said, "St. Thomas has enlightened the Church more than all the other doctors put together, and you will derive more advantage from his books in one year, than from the works of others in a life-time." And when some one, during the process of the canonization, observed that he never wrought a miracle, the Sovereign Pontiff replied, he has wrought as many miracles as he has written articles. During the Council of Trent, a table was placed in the middle of the hall, where the Fathers of the Council were in session, and on it lay the Holy Scriptures, the Decrees of the Popes, and the Summa of St. Thomas. After that, God alone could praise the great man in the Council of his Saints.

St. Thomas died at Fossa Nuova, a monastery of the order of Citeaux, almost half way between Naples and Rome, his natural and his spiritual country, not far from the castle of Roccia-Secca, where it is probable he was born, and near Monte Cassino, where he passed a portion of his infancy. Death overtook him there on his road to the second general council of Lyons, in which the reconciliation of the Greek and

Latin churches was to be negotiated. He had been summoned thither by Gregory X. The religious, crowded round his bed, besought him to give them a short exposition of the Canticle of Canticles, and it was on that song of love he gave his last lesson. He in his turn begged the religious to lay him on the ashes, that he might there receive the holy viaticum, and when he saw the host in the hands of the priest he said with tears, "I firmly believe that Jesus Christ, true God and true man, only Son of the Eternal Father and the Virgin Mother, is present in this august sacrament. I receive thee, O price of the redemption of my soul; I receive thee, viaticum of her pilgrimage—thee for whose love I have studied, watched, labored, preached, and taught. Never have I said any thing against you; but if I ever did so without knowing it, I uphold no such opinion, but leave every thing to the correction of the Holy Roman Church, in whose obedience I depart this life." Thus died St. Thomas, at the age of fifty, March 7, 1274, some hours after midnight, at daybreak.

The religious order which, almost in its cradle, had produced so bright a luminary of the Church,

ceased not to be the nurse of men of learning and distinguished writers; but the enumeration would be more than wearisome; it would include from four to five thousand names. It will suffice to say, that less than a century after the death of St. Dominic, his institute was honored by his contemporaries with the singular title of the "Order of Truth." Thus was accomplished to its full extent the double object contemplated in its establishment. Generations of apostles and doctors issuing from the germ there deposited, have diffused the truth over worlds of whose existence Dominic was ignorant; and after the lapse of six hundred years, offshoots of the same still flourish from Manilla to Rome, from St. Petersburg to Lima. When the young Gusman passed the Pyrenees with his bishop, Don Diego, nothing of the kind existed, nothing of the kind was looked for or thought possible; but the study which discerns a want, the virtue of devotedness, and the want which begets the study and the virtue—these three things are all-powerful. Happy the age in which they are to be found!

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## CHAPTER V.

ARTISTS, BISHOPS, CARDINALS, POPES, AND  
SAINTS OF BOTH SEXES, GIVEN TO THE  
CHURCH BY THE ORDER OF ST. DOMINIC.

ALTHOUGH the apostleship and divine science were the main object of the order of Preachers, Dominic excluded from his work no labor conducing to the salvation of souls. We must not therefore be astonished to meet the names of his disciples among those eminent in the arts, the pastoral ministry, the general government of the Church, and innumerable duties of all kinds connected by devotedness.

Were any one astonished to see artists for instance, and great artists, among the Friars-Preachers, he should have an inadequate idea of Christian art. Art, like speech and writing, being the expression of the true and beautiful, is entitled to cultivation by all those who seek to raise the minds of their fellows to the con-

templation of the invisible; and God himself, when giving to Moses the tables of the law, showed him on Sinai the model of the tabernacle and the Holy Ark. This was to teach us that the Architect of the Universe is the prime artist, and that the more a man imbibes of his spirit, the more capable and worthy is he of aspiring to the sacred functions of art. The religious of the middle ages were not ignorant of this truth. The cloisters contained architects, sculptors, musicians, just as they formed authors and orators. The Christian, as he passed under the sweet shadow of their arches, presented to God, along with his soul and body, the talent God had given him, and whatever that talent might be, there was no lack of masters or predecessors in its exercise. At the altar all the brethren resembled each other in prayer: once in their cells the prism was decomposed, and from each brother streamed his own peculiar ray of divine beauty. O fortunate days! O terrestrial paradises, destroyed by despotism and barbarity! All the resources of modern civilization are now unequal to the construction of a Christian church, while in the thirteenth

century, poor obscure Brothers-Preachers, Fra Sisto, Fra Ristoro, and Fra Giovanna, built in Florence that church of Santa Maria Novella, which Michael Angelo went to visit every day, and said that it was lovely, pure, and simple as a bride—whence the name still given it by the Florentines, the sweet name of “La Sposa.” The native and the stranger alike repeat that praise as they pass the square of La Sposa, but no one mentions the artists. They are respected by fame even in their tombs, she would seem afraid to alarm those chaste hearts whose humility transcended their genius.

Sometimes, however, she has not spared their brethren in art and religion. What name is more illustrious in painting than that of the Dominican, Fra Angelico de Fiesole. “Fra Angelico,” says Vasari, “might have led a happy life in the world, but as he had set the salvation of his soul above all price, he entered the order of St. Dominic without abandoning his art, and thus united with the care of his eternal salvation, the acquisition of eternal fame among men.” Never did Fra Angelico paint the images of Jesus Christ and his holy



Mother, but on his knees, and tears often bedewed his cheeks, attesting the sensibility of the artist and the piety of the Christian. When Michael Angelo saw in the church of St. Dominic at Fiesole, Fra Angelico's picture of the Annunciation, he gave vent to his admiration in these words: "A man can not have painted those figures without having seen them in the skies." Summoned to Rome by Eugene IV., Fra Angelico painted in the Vatican the grand frescoes representing the histories of St. Stephen and St. Lawrence; and the Pope, still more charmed with his soul than with his pencil, offered him the archbishopric of Florence, his native place. This was a recompense sometimes granted in that age, and the age preceding, for merit of this kind, nor was an architect deemed less worthy of an archbishopric than a preacher, for both of them say the same thing with the same faith, though each in a different art; but Fra Angelico obstinately refused the archiepiscopal crosier, and pointed out as more worthy than himself, Brother Antoninus, whom Nicholas V. afterward raised to the see of Florence, and who is now known as St. Antoninus.

The annals of painting record with pride the triumphs of Fra Bartoloméo, whose name in the world was Baccio de la Porta. Closing up to twenty years of age, when his talent was becoming known to himself and others, he heard the preaching of Jerome Savonarole, and espoused the cause of the reform which that great orator labored to introduce into Florence. At the moment of his master's arrest he was in the cloister of St. Mark, among the five hundred citizens who had assembled to defend Savonarole, and he was so thunderstricken by his death that he at once took the habit of St. Dominic at Prato, resolved to bury himself there for the remainder of his life, and never more to put pencil to canvas. Many illustrious men at this period felt a similar despondency, and after the death of Savonarole thought it no longer worth while to write, or speak, or paint—or to have any other object in the world than to dwell on its eternal vanity. In effect, modern paganism won the day. Luther was at the gates of Christendom, and Savonarole, after having often predicted this last calamity, shone out upon his pile the last flicker of a blaze his contemporaries

were destined no more to see. Fra Bartoloméo bore about with him in his heart an inconsolable grief, nor could the friendship of Raphael himself banish for one moment in his soul the presence of his first departed friend. However, after four years his reluctance yielded to the solicitations of the brethren, and he consented to produce new masterpieces, with a sorrow whose fountains success could never dry up.

Neither let us forget Fra Benedetto, a miniature painter in the convent of St. Mark, not known for his talent, but immortalized by the fact that on the day of Savonarole's arrest, he was armed *cap-a-pie* to defend him, and was only restrained from using the sword by the remonstrances of his master, who told him a religious should have no other arms than those of the spirit. He wished at least to accompany him and suffer with him; but Savonarole kept him back with these words, "Brother Benedetto, in the name of obedience, do not come, for I must this day die for the love of Jesus Christ." I should never tire of wandering among these recollections, for we are mere shades, and it is the consolation of the dead to revisit the living.

The order of Preachers has given to the Church a great number of bishops, many of whom played an important part. I shall not enter into any biographical details in their regard, nor touch on those who have been clothed with what Cardinal Bouillon, in his letter to Louis XIV., calls "the greatest dignity on earth next to the supreme," namely, the cardinalate. Suffice it to say, that in 1825, six hundred years after the death of Dominic, there had been under his habit seventy cardinals, four hundred and sixty archbishops, two thousand one hundred and thirty-six bishops, four presidents of general councils, twenty-five *legates a latere*, eighty apostolic nuncios, and a prince elector of the Holy Roman Empire. Most of the Friars-Preachers thus exalted had been simple monks, without birth or fortune, and owed to their virtues alone the choice made of them by sovereign pontiffs and temporal princes. The Roman Church has always preserved her custom of drawing from the dust of the cloister poor monks, and placing them at the head of nations, while in their turn men of eminent rank are advanced to the same place. This Church, the

mother and mistress of all others, has no exclusiveness against any kind of superiority: she accepts alike patricians and plebeians, and when all assist at the sacred ceremonies, you see under the same sackcloth or under the same purple all ranks, undistinguished in the equality of merit or self-denial. The Papacy is foremost to encircle her brow with this halo, and the tiara passes untarnished from the prince to the peasant; nay, the Sovereign Pontiff who now struggles with the house of Brandenburg,\* is the son of a humble citizen of Belluno. The white gown he now wears was his gown as Camaldule, and passing from the cloister to the Vatican, he did not trouble himself to change it: the heart beneath it was unchanged.

More than one Brother-Preacher also received and did honor to the tiara. The first was Pierre de Tarantaise, Archbishop of Lyons, thence translated to Tarantaise, named Cardinal Bishop of Ostia and Vellitri, Grand Penitentiary, and lastly Pope in 1276, under the title of Innocent V. Although his pontificate lasted only five months, he had time to reconcile the

\* Gregory XVI.

republics of Lucca and Pisa and give peace to Florence.

The pontificate of Nicholas Boccasini, elected in 1303, and who took the name of Benedict XI., was also short, but remarkable for the grave nature of the circumstances in which he received it, and to which he was not unequal. He was the successor of Boniface VIII. The conclave chose him in recompense for his courageous conduct on the day of Anagni, when after every one had abandoned the Sovereign Pontiff, he with another cardinal stayed by his side, and supported the majesty of the Holy See against the buffet of Nogaret. No sooner was he elected, than he labored for the peace of the Church with as much meekness as he had shown firmness in danger, and France owes to him her extrication from a most critical position, without the loss of one drop of blood.

In 1556, Brother Michael Ghisleri, called the Alexandrine Cardinal, because he was born near Alexandria in Piedmont, was elected Pope, and took the name of Pius V. During the late pontificates he had given such proofs of firmness and independence, that the Romans were

alarmed at his election. The new Pope was aware of this, and replied to those who spoke to him on the subject : "I shall take care that the Roman people shall regret my death more than my election." And so it actually happened. He crowded so many illustrious actions into : reign of six years, that his death was followed by an universal mourning. No one is ignorant of his league with Venice and Spain against the Turks in 1571, the result of which was the famous battle of Lepanto, where the Christian arms obtained one of the most memorable and timely triumphs that has ever earned the gratitude of Europe.

From St. Pius V. to Benedict XIII., the last Dominican Pope, there is a lapse of one hundred and fifty years. The pontificate now played a far different part from heretofore. Excluded from participation in the general affairs of Europe by the treaty of Westphalia, and the despotism then installed upon the Christian thrones, the only spectacle it was in his power to show the world, was that of virtue disarmed, awaiting the hour of revolution and martyrdom. It is the lot of truth on this earth, to derive

its own peculiar luster from any situation in which you may choose to place it. If men invest it with power, it communicates to their works a mighty impulse, changes their wars of ambition into civilizing crusades, steps in between the injustice of the great, and the turbulence of the crowd, founds universities, abolishes slavery, opens to poverty and misfortune asylums innumerable, compels the earth to bear the weight of everlasting edifices, exalts, enlarges, and strengthens humanity. If men withdraw that power, she retires and sits at her gate, as an old man, broken by years and stripped of his functions, seats himself at the close of the day before his house, and presents to the citizens who salute him as they pass, a venerable image of all that is good. If men go further, and persecute the truth, then, exhausted as she appeared, she draws from her very antiquity strength to subdue worlds—she opens her treasures—she girds on the sword which slew her apostles, and the chains that bruised the sides of the virgins who died for God—she strings round her neck the bones of children who, torn on the rack, laughed to scorn pro-



consuls and emperors—she takes the club that crushed her children by myriads; and thus decked out, she stands erect in the public place, knowing that God is behind her, and that all is saved when all seems lost. Let men therefore do what they will, truth changes in nothing but the nature of her glory; she lays down one crown to assume another, and be it of gold or iron, that crown is always supreme.

Such being the lot of truth, such must be the lot of the Papacy which is its organ. It does not depend upon a Pope to choose the nature of his power, more than he can choose his time, but if he be worthy of his place, he always has a power to wield. Benedict XIII., elected in 1724, could not, like Innocent V., act as mediator between Lucca and Pisa, nor like Benedict XI. give peace to France, nor like St. Pius V. gain the battle of Lepanto, nor was it his fate to endure the imprisonment and exile in store for his successors, Pius VI. and Pius VII. His day was marked down between the two epochs, and he was every thing that a Pope of the eighteenth century ought to be—a man of worth, a saint. A member of the illustrious family of

Gravina Orsini, he quitted the world in early youth, was always a model of simplicity, which covered with an amiable veil his other virtues; and when the tiara dropped of itself upon his brow, he loved to hide it from the gaze of men, going on foot, to visit the churches and hospitals of Rome. He preferred to the solemn traditions of the apostolic court, sentiments well beseeeming the heart of him who abandoned the palace of his fathers for the cell of the Friar-Preacher.

In these four Dominican Popes the entire character of the order is epitomized. Each of them met the occasions of the time with a certain flexibility, while the characteristic tact of these periods nowise corrupted the military courage which always belonged to the Dominican, and in virtue of which the history of the order is one unbroken line. No two things are more akin than the French character and the Dominican, and to this it is owing, that in the list I have before me, which reaches only to 1720, out of sixty masters-general, seventeen, nearly a third of the entire are French. No other order having its center at Rome can exhibit a similar phenomenon.

But all religious orders, whatever be the peculiar character of each, whatever be the diversity of origin, end, and means, must have one rallying point where all can meet, and that is sanctity. To this must converge every thing on which the breath of God has breathed. There assemble all those who have given their lives to God and man, under whatever form of donation. The spotless virgin, the Christian mother, the apostle, the doctor, the martyr of truth, the workman, earning his bread by a toil abject in itself, but ennobled by its intention; the soldier who has fallen with a just heart, the criminal who by penance has transformed his execution into a voluntary immolation of self; the religious girded with the cord of St. Francis, or clad in the sackcloth of St. Bruno, if the cord and the sackcloth mortify a devoted flesh—in a word, every body and every soul which has not lived for itself, but for God in men, for men in God—all congregate in sanctity. This sanctity, the bond of all moral beings, is devotedness derived from its sublimest source. Wherefore sacrifice is by excellence the act of religion; and the cross, the present and future symbol of

Christianity, will appear at the last day to judge the living and the dead. Whoever, then, shall be measured by the cross and reach the standard, shall be saved, whoever shall have nothing in his heart or members conformable to the cross must perish. Those shall go to the kingdom of love, these to the kingdom of self. Here below those kingdoms are not so distinguishable from each other. The Church, the spring of love, and the world, the spring of self, continually penetrate and repel each other, and in this inexhaustible conflict the religious orders are the last effort of the Church to conquer the world by devotedness, and consequently by sanctity. We have thus been enabled to see from every thing in history whether the order of St. Dominic has discharged this portion of its task. From age to age it has swelled with innumerable names the venerable list of men whom the voice of nations and that of the Church has proclaimed, even from this earth, citizens of heaven. Every day the poor man crosses his hands over the balustrade encircling the shrine or the statue of some Brother-Preacher, and refreshes his soul with the thought of a being who

preferred poverty to every worldly advantage. Let us leave these revered names under the protection of those who know them and invoke them; and we shall be permitted to close this slight sketch of so immense an order with the panegyric pronounced upon it in the fourteenth century by one of the greatest of Christian poets, the independent bard of the "*Divina Commedia*."\*

There whence the zephyr with low-whispering wing,  
To greet the flowers and buds of Europe flies,  
Breathing into their folds the life of spring,  
Close to those waves whose mountain crests arise  
To veil the sun from whoso that way hies :  
Blest Calaroga sits, beneath the shade  
Enthroned, secure of that protecting shield,  
Which bears in ancient blazonry displayed  
The tower and lion on its ample field.

There waked to life the servant of the Lord,  
Seraph in love, and champion in the fight  
Of faith—to all her foes, a foe abhorred,  
But to the brethren meek. Scarce saw he light—  
That soul with visions of the future bright—

\* The translator not being able at the moment to lay his hand on the "*Divina Commedia*," was obliged to use the French version, which was in all probability sufficiently free already.

Flashed on his mother, a prophetic beam—  
When at the font baptismal, faith and he  
Were wedded, each the other's hope—a dream  
To men disclosed his mighty destiny.

The dream *she* saw, who plighted in his stead  
The infant's truth to heaven—and with a name  
E'en from the Lord derived, an angel sped,  
To decorate the babe, as who might claim  
That title on the roll of heaven's pure fame.  
Dedicate to the Lord he well was styled,  
And truly Dominic : of him I sing,  
Beneath whose genial hand the garden smiled  
Of Christ—to him this tribute lay I bring.

Soon was he known, the envoy and the friend  
Of Christ—his instincts infantine all fired  
With love of Christ's first precept. See him spend  
The live-long night unsleeping and untired  
Upon the naked earth, as though inspired  
To say, 'Tis wherefore I am come. O thou  
Happiest of men, his father ; happiest, too,  
And full of grace, his mother—who are now  
Felix and John, named with sense so true.

Soon, yet for no vain love of earthly lore,  
But sole for manna from above, he grows  
In Israel a master—and once more  
The vine that drooped and sickened, daily shows  
Her grateful sap, full well the difference knows  
'Twixt hands unblest and hallowed ; he the throne  
Pontific asks not—now less sweet that see,  
To Christ's dear poor—through no fault of its own,  
But his who sits thereon—ah ! woe is me.

Guileless, he sought not to give less for more,  
Nor craved he benefice, nor sought to tear,  
With ravening greed from out the scanty store  
Of Christian poor, unrighteous tithe—to dare  
The fight for faith, was all he claimed his share :  
To vindicate the gospel from the world.

Thus overflowed in the strong and melancholy mind of Dante, the admiration with which the order of Saint Dominic had inspired him. This banished man, whose pen spared no guilty grandeur, always spoke of the Brothers-Preachers and Friars-Minor as the heroes of his age ; and his imagination, after having sadly traversed the world during the long days of his exile, reverted to them with a sentiment of respect, a sentiment of which he seldom tasted the pleasure.

Such were the sentiments of the greatest men of the middle ages. The simultaneous appearance of Saint Dominic and Saint Francis, produced upon those who were then playing their parts in the world, the effect of a miracle, and the universal thrill that ran through them all, conferred on both a glory that no succeeding age can dim. Contemporaries are the proper judges of the men and things of their own day.

Those who have eaten of the same bread can say how they relished it; and as the future shall not be able to enter into the generous ideas of the present, so let us suffer the past to know its own benefactors, and those who did it wrong. The sick man, shifted to the left, calls to be turned again to the right; but while he blesses the second hand which gave him ease, he need not curse the first. They are equally sacred to him.



## CHAPTER VI.

## THE INQUISITION.

THE Inquisition is a tribunal established in some Christian countries, by the co-operation of the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, for the discovery and repression of acts tending to subvert religion.

Saint Dominic is accused of having originated this tribunal.

The Dominicans are accused of having been its promoters and principal instruments.

The Spanish Dominicans are more especially held accountable.

Now, Saint Dominic was not the founder of the Inquisition, nor did he ever discharge inquisitorial functions.

The Dominicans have been neither the promoters nor principal agents of the Inquisition.

And touching the Spanish Inquisition, far from being responsible for its acts, they were removed from it by the kings of Spain, when,

toward the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth centuries, those monarchs changed the tribunal in question into a new and political institution, requiring more pliant ministers than these religious.

Such assertions may astonish men who take their notions of history from Protestants and rationalists; but it will not surprise those who know that history, for three centuries, has been a perpetual and flagrant lie, which the learned in France, Germany, and England have already gone a great way in demolishing. At any rate, I shall bring forward my proofs.

In 1812, the Spanish Cortes, assembled in the Island of Leon, appointed a committee of the constitution to prepare (among other things) a report and bill regarding the tribunal of the Inquisition. The committee, in its report, entered into details of the origin and development of that tribunal, and recommended its abolition in Spain. This document, framed in a spirit, rationalist, liberalist, and Spanish, and therefore little open to suspicion of partiality for the Inquisition, is the first I shall rely upon in favor of the order.

Another document, not less valuable, is the History of the Inquisition, published at Amsterdam, in 1692, by Philip Van Lymborch, Professor of Theology among the Calvinist remonstrants. This history, as hostile as possible to the Catholic Church, the Inquisition, and the Dominicans, shall furnish me with a second justification of the order.

I shall advance nothing that does not rest on one or the other of those unfriendly authorities, and sometimes on both conjointly. They shall be my text, and any remark of mine must be looked on as a mere comment.

To begin with the Cortes. Observe the way in which the committee expresses itself regarding St. Dominic: "The early inquisitors encountered heresy with no other arms than those of prayer, patience, and instruction. And this remark applies more particularly to Saint Dominic, as we are assured by the Bollandists, with Fathers Echard and Tournon." \* And lower

\* Report on the Tribunal of the Inquisition, with the draft of a decree touching the tribunals established for the protection of religion; presented to the Cortes General and Extraordinary, by the Committee of Constitution. Cadiz 1812.

down, "Philip II., that most absurd of princes, was the real founder of the Inquisition, and his jealous policy brought it to the pitch of power it attained. King after king rejected every suggestion and discountenanced every suspicion breathed against that tribunal, because the nomination, suspension and dismissal of the inquisitors belonged to their absolute prerogative; and they had nothing to fear from the tribunal, while it was an object of terror to their subjects only." \*

Thus the Committee of the Cortes distinguishes two extreme periods in the history of the Inquisition, that of St. Dominic and that of Philip II.: the saint armed with prayer, patience, and instruction; the king, the real founder of the Inquisition, transforming it into a horrible tribunal, of which the kings were the absolute masters. I might stop here, for what can be more decisive for any one that knows how to read? What matters it, if the committee class St. Dominic with the first inquisitors, when the only arms of those first inquisitors were prayer, patience, and instruction? What becomes of the similarity between the work of St.

\* Report, &c., page 89.

Dominic and that of Philip II., divided by an interval of three centuries: one religious, the other political—one intrusted to men who pray and teach with patience, the other to kings who “reject suggestions, and discountenance suspicion breathed against a tribunal of which they are absolute masters?” But in a matter so important, we can not allow the committee even a harmless error: although it neither imputes the institution of the Inquisition to St. Dominic, nor charges him with harshness in his administration, it places him among the first inquisitors; and in so doing, puts forward a statement perfectly erroneous, as we shall see.

Let us first give a correct idea of the Inquisition.

The Inquisition does not consist in the penal laws enacted against the public profession of heresy, or overt acts subversive of religion. For a thousand years, similar laws have prevailed in the Christian commonwealth. Constantine and his successors published a great number, as may be seen in the Theodosian code, and they were all grounded on this maxim—that religion being the grand interest of nations, they have a right to place it under the same protection as the

property, life, and honor of a citizen. I do not now inquire what is the weight of the maxim in question. I barely enunciate it. Till within a late period it passed for incontestible; every nation of the earth put it in force; and at the present day religious liberty exists in only two countries, namely, Belgium and the United States. Everywhere else, without excepting even France, the ancient principle prevails, though somewhat weakened in its application. It was believed, and is yet almost universally believed, that civil society ought to prevent overt acts contrary to the religion it professes, and that it is not reasonable to leave religion at the mercy of every comer who has the boldness to maintain a new dogma. To this effect was the judgment of the Court of Appeal, even since 1830, when it ruled that the charter conferred no right on individuals to open new temples or establish new pulpits. The ancient principle is therefore maintained in our jurisprudence and the laws it interprets. The French magistracy has decided just as the magistrates of the middle ages should have done, just as the Chinese magistrate does at present, when he orders our mission-

aries to be strangled. It does not affect the question to say the penalty is greatly mitigated ; so is the penalty for every crime whatever. The mitigation of a penalty does not declare the offense to which it is annexed innocent ; above all, it does not leave it free. France, then, has her own share of the principle from which sprung the Inquisition.

As late as the close of the twelfth century, religious offenses were prosecuted and judged by the civil courts. The Church dealt her anathema against any doctrine ; should its upholders after that, obstinately continue to propagate it by word of mouth or writing, in public or in private, they were indicted and condemned at common law. At furthest, the ecclesiastical authority sometimes interfered, but only to the length of preferring its complaint. Side by side, however, with this social fact of the repression of heresies, an element of purely Christian origin developed itself, and that was, mildness to the criminal, and more especially to such as were criminal in opinion only. All Christians were convinced that faith was a free act, of which persuasion and grace are the only source. All

said with St. Athanasius, "The property of a religion of love is to persuade, not to constrain."\* Opinions were divided, however, as to the degree of liberty it might be proper to allow. This second question appeared to them to differ widely from the first: it is one thing to put conscience under no restraint; and another, to abandon it to the arbitrary action of vicious agency. The advocates of absolute liberty, spoke thus by the mouth of St. Hilary, bishop of Poitiers—"Suffer us to deplore the misery of this age, and the foolish opinions of the day, when it is thought to protect God by means of man, and the Church of Christ by the power of the world. Ye bishops who believe this, on what suffrage, I pray you, did the apostles rely when they went forth to preach the gospel? What arms did they summon to their aid, as they announced Jesus Christ? How did they convert nations from the worship of idols to that of the true God? Did they who proclaimed God in hymns, after chains and stripes, receive their dignity from the palace? Whether was it armed with the edicts of the prince or

\* Letter to the Solitaries.



exhibited as a malefactor, that Paul assembled the Church of Christ? Was it under the patronage of Nero, Vespasian, and Decius, or under their ban, that the Divine Word flourished? Those who lived by the labor of their hands, who met in secret assemblies, who traversed hamlets, towns, nations, earth and sea, in defiance of imperial edicts, had they not the keys of the kingdom of Heaven? And was not the Christ preached, the more it was forbidden to preach him? But now, O sorrow! earthly suffrages are required to recommend divine faith, and Christ is taunted with want of power when men intrigue on his behalf. Let the Church, then, spread terror by exile and imprisonment, she who had been intrusted to the fosterage of exile and imprisonment herself. Let her await her destiny from those who are willing to embrace her communion, she who had been consecrated by the hand of the persecutor.”\*

St. Augustine, originally belonging to this school, addressed the Manicheans in the same spirit. “Let those persecute you who do not know how laborious is the acquirement of truth,

\* Against Auxentius.

and how hard it is to escape from error. Let those persecute you, who know not how rare and difficult it is to overcome the phantoms of the flesh by the sincerity of a pious understanding. Let them persecute you, who know not how hard it is to cure the eye of the soul, so that it discern its Sun, not the sun which you adore, and which shines for the eye of the flesh in man and beast, but the Sun of which it is written in the prophet, *The sun of justice has arisen for me*; and of which the gospel says, *It is the light which enlighteneth every man coming into the world*. Let those persecute you who know not at the cost of what sighs and groans you gain the least knowledge of God. In fine, let those persecute you who have never been deceived by the error which leads you astray.”\*

Subsequently, St. Augustine went over to the opposite school, driven to it by the fury of the African Donatists against the Church. He considered himself indebted to experience for the knowledge of two truths which he had not learned directly from the gospel. In the first

\* Against the letter of Fundanius.

place, that error is essentially persecuting, and affords as little freedom as possible to truth; and secondly, that weak understandings are overborne by the strong, just as a weak body by a stronger. Hence he inferred that the repression of error is a legitimate defense against two species of tyranny—the tyranny of persecution, and the tyranny of seduction.

I deal still in mere history.

Nevertheless, this second school was leavened, though not to the same extent, with the same imperishable sentiment of Christian mildness; and St. Augustine, writing to Donatus, proconsul of Asia, made use of those very remarkable words in reference to the most atrocious heretics that ever lived:—"We desired that they be corrected, not put to death; that they be subjected to a repressive discipline, and not consigned to the punishment they deserve. . . . . If you deprive men of life for these crimes, you will prevent us from prosecuting them before your tribunal, and then the daring of our enemies, reaching its height, will work our ruin, and all through the necessity under which you shall have laid us of preferring death

at their hands, to subjecting them to your judgment.”\*

It was in obedience to these maxims that St Martin of Tours firmly refused to hold communion with those bishops who had taken part in the bloody condemnation of the Spanish Priscillianites.

We see the Church therefore take her place midway between the two extremes of absolute freedom for error, and its pursuit to the uttermost by the inexorable sword of the civil law. Some of the doctors incline to the former and some to the latter course; some are for unbounded lenity, not one for cold, unmitigated rigor. The Church is crucified between two fears equally terrible. If she give error free scope, she has to dread the oppression of her children; if she employ for its extinction the sword of the “exterior bishop,” she fears to exercise oppression herself. Blood is everywhere in view. The course of events increased this agony—for the laws enacted against the heretics recoiled incessantly upon the Catholics, and from Arius to the Iconoclasts we read of

\* Letter cxxvii.

nothing but the slaughter, exile, and imprisonment of bishops, and priests driven back to the catacombs by emperors who left them no choice between their doctrines and their executioners.

The moment the Church had it in her power, she thought seriously of extricating herself from this situation. The words of St. Augustine now had time to ripen: "We wish they should be corrected, not put to death; that they should be subjected to a repressive discipline, but not consigned to the punishment they deserve." The Papacy then conceived a design for which the nineteenth century claims great credit, but which engaged the attention of the Popes six hundred years ago—no other than that of the penitentiary system. Previously there had been only two kinds of tribunal to take cognizance of the crimes of men—namely, the civil, and that of Christian penance. The inconvenience of the latter was, that it could only reach those sinners who made voluntary avowals of their faults; the inconvenience of the former, which was armed with force, was felt in its having no power over the hearts of the guilty. It was known that it exercised a merciless retribution,

and inflicted an external wound, incapable of healing the wound within. Between these two tribunals the Popes wished to establish an intermediary—a golden mean—a tribunal having the prerogative of pardoning, or even of modifying the penalty already adjudged—a tribunal which might awaken remorse in the criminal, and step by step follow up remorse by goodness—a tribunal which should change punishment into penance, and the scaffold into instruction, not abandoning the convicted to the fatal arm of human justice till the last extremity. Such was that execrable tribunal, the Inquisition—not the Spanish Inquisition, corrupted by the despotism of the kings of Spain and the particular character of that nation, but the Inquisition such as the Popes after many trials and efforts realized in 1542, in the *Roman Congregation of the Holy Office*—the mildest tribunal in the world, the only one which, for the three hundred years it has lasted, has not shed one drop of blood.

Besides, I am not the first to notice the penitentiary and progressive nature of the Inquisition. The *Journal des Debats* was long beforehand with me. “After all,” says the writer,

“where is the tribunal in Europe, with the exception of the Inquisition, which discharges the guilty on their avowal of repentance? What individual having illegal designs, affecting irreligious conduct, and professing principles contrary to those established by law for the preservation of public order has been proceeded against without two previous warnings from the tribunal? If he relapse, if in defiance of the warnings received, he persist in his offensive practices, he is arrested: if he repent he is set at liberty. M. Bourgoing, whose opinions were above suspicion, when he wrote his *Picture of Modern Spain*, says in reference to the Holy Office: ‘I shall admit, in justice to the truth, that the Inquisition might in our days be cited as a model of equity.’ What an admission! How should it be received were it to proceed from us? But M. Bourgoing saw nothing in the Inquisition but what it really is, an instrument of deep policy.”

It is of the *Spanish Inquisition* that the *Journal des Débats* speaks thus. What might he not have said, if instead of confining his attention to a perverted Inquisition, he had considered the

primitive object of this institution, and its complete realization in the Roman Congregation of the Holy Office? For this reason, if I show that St. Dominic was not the founder of the Inquisition, it is not with a view to relieve his glorious shoulder from an unaccountable burden, but simply because it is not true. The germ of the Inquisition existed before St. Dominic; he contributed nothing to its development; and it was not till long after his death that this tribunal assumed a definite shape and acquired real power.

In effect, the difficulties standing in the way of its conception as well as of its realization were enormous. The penitentiary system should necessarily be taken from the cloister, and applied to the world without, by a tribunal which could not itself be lay, while it indispensably required the co-operation of laymen; and which could not be episcopal, although needing the co-operation of the bishops. This could not be a lay tribunal, because the working out of the inward reformation, and the apportioning of mercy according to the degree of reformation, required the intervention of priests, and a



conscience consecrated for the reception of avowals; nevertheless the co-operation of laymen was necessary, inasmuch as the Church herself possesses no means of compulsion. Nor could this tribunal be episcopal, because the bishops, overburdened by the care of their sees, should have bent under this new load; and, moreover, the direction of the criminal procedures was sure to deprive them to a certain extent of that tender majesty which the people reverence in them, and with which they should never part for a moment. Meanwhile, their concurrence was necessary, since they are the natural judges of all points of doctrine. Moreover, so new was the element thus introduced into the ordinary course of human affairs, that it was never more necessary to feel one's way with caution.

In 1184, Pope Lucius III., driven from Rome by the repeated insults of the Romans, was living at Verona. The Emperor Frederick I. repaired to the town, accompanied by numerous bishops and lords. They there held a grand council, on which Fleury comments as follows in his *Ecclesiastical History*—"I think I can discover here the origin of the Inquisition against heretics, in

the fact that the bishops were ordered to make inquiries personally or by commissaries touching persons suspected of heresy, upon common hearsay or private information, while the various degrees of *suspected*, *convicted*, *penitent*, and *relapsed* are specified, and the punishment graduated accordingly ; and finally, in the regulation, that after the Church shall have applied her spiritual penalties to the accused, she shall hand them over to the secular power.” \*

In point of fact, we have here beyond question all the features of the early Inquisition, undeveloped, it is true, but still entire—the search after heretics by commissaries—a graduated scale of spiritual penalties—a surrender to the secular power in the case of manifest impenitence, and lastly, the co-operation of bishops and laymen. A definite form alone is wanting—that is to say, the institution of a special tribunal to administer this department of justice ; but that stage was not reached till a much later period.

Twelve years after the Council of Verona, in 1198, appear the first inquisitorial commissaries of whom history takes notice. They were two

\* Hist. Eccl., L. lxxiii., No. 5.

monks of the order of Citeaux, Rainier and Guy by name. They were sent to Languedoc by Pope Innocent III. for the discovery and conversion of the Albigensian heretics. Fleury, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, and Don Vaissete, in the *History of Languedoc*, both style them *Inquisitors*.\*

The three legates of the order of Citeaux whom St. Dominic and the bishops of Osma met at Montpellier toward the end of 1205, were also inquisitorial commissaries.

Thus, when St. Dominic first appeared upon the stage, the foundations of the Inquisition had been already twenty-one years laid at the Council of Verona, and to the order of Citeaux was intrusted the exercise of this new office, in its primitive and as yet incomplete shape. And how does St. Dominic present himself to the legates—"Put aside," he said, "these equipages, these servants, this parade, this pomp, which only serves to harden the heretics. Let us go on foot to seek them and speak to them. Let us go to suffer and die for them." Unheard-of thing.

\* Hist. Eccl., L. lxxv., No. 8. Hist. du Languedoc, Tom. III., L. xxi., p. 13.

Rationalism has taken her stand against history. In the terrible war of the Albigenses, the Abbots of Citeaux were at the head of every thing; they presided in the assemblies of bishops and knights, they wielded the secular and ecclesiastical power against the heretics. St. Dominic, on the contrary, exhibits himself as what we should call at the present day a *new man*. He takes no more part in the Council than he does in the combat; he prays, he fasts, he preaches, he rescues a young man from execution by predicting that he will one day become a great saint. A poor heretic woman declares she can not abandon her heresy, as without it she has no means of living, and St. Dominic wishes to sell himself as a slave to procure bread for her. He brings young girls into a community, to withdraw them from the temptation of poverty. He founds a new religious order to act upon the heretics, not by compulsion, but by preaching and divine science. Of all the contemporary authors who have written his life, Thierri d'Apolda, Constantine, bishop of Devito, Bartholomew, bishop of Trent, Father Humbert, Nicholas Trevet, not one attributes to him a

single inquisitorial act. All, like the Cortes of 1812, represent him as having no other arms than those of *prayer, patience, and instruction*, with the exception of some miracles, which injured no one. In 1215 he was present at the General Council of Lateran, where a fine occasion offered to promote the interests of the Inquisition if he wished to do so. They remained precisely as they had been. In 1216, his order is confirmed by two bulls of Honorius III., and in neither of these instruments is allusion made to any service of his as inquisitor. During the five remaining years of his life he received diplomas and briefs from the Holy See, in none of which is he spoken of as inquisitor. Eight years after his death, a council was convoked at Toulouse under the presidency of an apostolic delegate, and there the decrees of the Council of Verona respecting the Inquisition were renewed with greater completeness. What then? In that town of Toulouse, where Dominic was so well known, where his order had its rise, where it was at the actual moment established, the office of inquisitor is not given to the Brothers-Preachers.

“The bishops,” says the Council, “shall choose in each parish, a priest and two or three laymen of good repute, to whom they shall administer an oath to prosecute the search after heretics with zeal and exactitude.” \*

Had St. Dominic been the founder and promoter of the Inquisition, had he left it as an inheritance to his religious, could such a decree have been issued? The name of *Friar-Preacher* is an immortal declaration of the object proposed to himself by St. Dominic, as that of *Friar-Minor* is of the object had in view by St. Francis of Assisium—both were the new men of their age. To save the Church they both planted a standard differing from that of human power, and for the same reason the most independent spirits of those times have magnified the memory of both. When St. Dominic and St. Francis met at Rome, recognized each other at first sight, and fell upon each other's neck—it was the embrace of the two grand powers of the Church, poverty and the Word.

To these proofs I shall add an inquiry into the allegations of our adversaries, embodied in

\* Fleury, Hist. Eccles., Liv. lxxix., No. 58; year 1229.

the History of the Inquisition by Philip Van Lymborch, in the tenth chapter of the first book. An obvious method of establishing his thesis against St. Dominic lay open to Lymborch. He had only to quote the contemporary authors; but as no contemporary author ascribes to St. Dominic the facts imputed to him by Protestant and rationalist, Lymborch confined himself to the strange proofs I shall produce.

First, the house of the Inquisition at Toulouse was originally given to St. Dominic, therefore St. Dominic was the first inquisitor. The house of which Lymborch speaks, was given in 1215 to St. Dominic by Peter Celloni, and the same became that of the Inquisition in 1253, that is to say, twelve years after the death of St. Dominic, when Peter Celloni, to whom it originally belonged, and who was at the time a Friar-Precacher, was named inquisitor at Toulouse by Gregory IX. These facts are recorded in the contemporary chronicle of Guillaume de Puy-Laurens, chaplain of Raymond VII., count of Toulouse.

Secondly, Louis de Param, who has written concerning the origin and progress of the Inquisi-

tion, says that St. Dominic imparted to a legate of the Pope in France, the idea he had of *introducing the Inquisition*, and that after the Council of Lateran he was nominated inquisitor in certain pontifical letters, which some authors *testified to having seen*. Now Louis de Param wrote his treatise toward the end of the sixteenth century, nearly four hundred years after the death of St. Dominic, and he produces no contemporary author to back his assertion. Lymborch himself attaches so little credit to his testimony, that he adds immediately afterward, "*Be that as it may*, there can be no doubt St. Dominic was a cruel and sanguinary man." Then in proof of this cruelty, he brings forward the text of a public penance imposed by St. Dominic on a certain Ponee Roger, to reconcile him to the Church, a penance then in use, and, considering the time, quite as simple as the canonical penances of the primitive church.

Those who will take the trouble to open Lymborch may have the evidence of their own eyes that he assigns no other reason for attributing to St. Dominic the character of first inquisitor.



Now the Friars-Preachers were no more the promoters of the Inquisition than their patriarch was its founder. Popes, bishops, and kings were the promoters of the Inquisition. "The Pope," says Lymborch, "made every effort to secure for the inquisitors a greater share of power, and to have a tribunal established in which they might sit as judges, delegated by the Sovereign Pontiff, and representing his person in all causes of heresy."\*

With respect to the bishops, we have already seen how they proceeded in the Council of Toulouse in 1229; and they, in two councils, one held at Narbonne in 1235, the other at Beziers in 1246, drew up the first rules of the Inquisition, in concert with the legates of the Holy See.†

The princes of Europe also took part in its formation, and with more activity than any one else. "The Emperor Frederick II.," says Lymborch, "promulgated at Padua some laws against the heretics, their accomplices and

\* Hist. of Inquisit., Book 1, Chap. xii.

† Fleury, Hist. Eccl., L. lxxx., No. 30, and lxxxiv., No. 41, and Lymborch, Hist. Inquis., B. 1, Chap. xii.

abettors, which greatly advanced the Inquisition.\* St. Louis, in 1255, besought Pope Alexander IV. to establish inquisitors of the faith in the kingdom of France;† and about the same period the Senate of Venice, of its own accord, and under its own authority, commissioned some laymen to act as inquisitors of the faith; referred to the Patriarch of Grade, and other Venetian bishops, the doctrinal questions; and reserved to itself the application of capital punishment to those convicted of heresy.‡ In 1419, Alphonso, king of Aragon, solicited from Pope Martin V. the extension of the Inquisition to the kingdom of Valencia.§ Toward the close of the fifteenth century, “the Catholic sovereigns (Ferdinand and Isabella) urgently prayed the Roman Pontiff to enable them to appoint inquisitors in the kingdoms of Castile and Leon; and in order that no nation might surpass them in zeal against the adversaries of the Roman faith, or rather that they might surpass all others, they, under the authority of Sixtus IV., intro-

\* Lymborch, History of the Inquisition, B. 1, Chap. xii.

† Ibid., B. 1, Chap. xii.      ‡ Ibid., B. 1, Chap. xvii.

§ Ibid., B. 1, Chap. xxiii.

duced the Inquisition into their kingdoms, with greater pomp, a more august machinery, and more ample powers." \* The Cortes of 1812 concur with Lymborch in these particulars: "The Inquisition was originally an institution demanded and established by the kings of Spain, under difficult and extraordinary circumstances."† In 1569 the Aragonese having obtained from Leo X. a mitigation of the Inquisitorial proceedings, as established by Isabella and Ferdinand, Charles V. opposed the execution of the bull, and obtained by dint of remonstrances that things should remain on their old footing.‡ In 1543, the Inquisition had fallen into disuse in Sicily, and Charles V., by a decree in Council revived it, and reinvested it with all its privileges.§ In 1521, John III., king of Portugal, "earnestly besought the Sovereign Pontiff, Clement VII., to grant to his kingdoms the tribunal of the Inquisition, and although this Pope in deference to the solicitations of the Jews, who

\* Lymborch, History of the Inquisition, B. 1, Chap. xxiv. alinéas, 3 & 4.

† Report on the Tribunal of the Inquisition, &c., p. 37.

‡ Ibid, p. 52.

§ Lymborch, Hist. of Inquis., B. 1, Chap. xxvii.

opposed the desires of the king, *resisted long and often*, he ended with regret by giving his consent in the legal form, the 16 Kal. January, 1531. Nevertheless, the same King John III., seeing that the faith was every day going more and more to ruin, and that the Sovereign Pontiff *appeared in some sort not to be much concerned at it*, employed the remedy of the Inquisition *under a form more suitable to the state of things*, and addressed to the Sovereign Pontiff letters every way worthy of his zeal, and in which he told him that both to the Pope, himself, and to his predecessor Clement VII., he had preferred urgent and anxious requests on the subject for fifteen years. The Pope, moved by these letters and the reasons they alleged, yielded at length, in the year of our Lord 1536."\* After all these princes came Philip II., *the real founder of the Inquisition* in Spain, according to the Cortes of 1812.

These facts remove all doubt as to the true promoters of the Inquisition, who were no other

\* Antonio Louza on the Origin of the Holy Office of the Inquisition in the kingdom of Portugal, quoted by Lymborch, *Hist. Inquis.*, B. 1, Chap. v.

than the Popes, Bishops of France, Emperors of Germany, Senate of Venice, and Kings of Spain and Portugal. It is worth remarking, also, how the further we advance, a growing repugnance shows itself on the part of the Pontiffs, to connect themselves with the development which policy is giving to the Inquisition. We shall presently have new proofs of it.

The Friars-Preachers were not the principal instruments of the Inquisition; they took their part in it like *every one else*. There exists no bull, nor document of any kind, pontifical, episcopal, or royal, investing the Dominicans exclusively, or in general, with the office of inquisitors. It was first intrusted to the order of Cîteaux; and the Council of Toulouse, in 1229, did not think of confiding it to the Friars-Preachers, in what might be called their native place. It was not till the year 1232 that a diploma of Gregory IX., directed to the Archbishop of Tarragona, recommended him to choose for the office of inquisitors some Friars-Preachers, and others whom he should judge fit.\* In 1233 the

\* Hist. Inquis., B. 1, Chap. xxiii.

same Pope appointed two Dominicans inquisitors in Toulouse.\* In 1238, he empowered the provincial of the Friars-Preachers in Lombardy to appoint inquisitors in his district.† The Friars-Minor are however called to share these functions. In 1208, history notices a Friar-Minor inquisitor in Toulouse; and in 1239, the Pope wrote to the Minister of the Friars-Minor, and the Masters of the Friars-Preachers of Navarre, intrusting to them the office of inquisitor.‡ In 1254, Innocent IV. divided Italy under this head, into two districts, to one of which he appointed the Friars-Minor, and to the other the Friars-Preachers. To the first he assigned the city of Rome, the patrimony of St. Peter, the duchy of Spoleto, and the rest of the Roman States as far as Bologna, together with Tuscany; to the second, Lombardy, the Bolognese, and the Marches of Trevisa and Genoa.§ Thus the Preachers had neither Rome nor the Roman

\* Chronicles of Bernard Guidonis and Guillaume de Puy-Laurens.

† Lymborch, *Hist. of Inquis.*, B. 1, Chap. xiii.

‡ Lymborch, and Wading, *Hist. of the Friars-Minor*, year 1238.

§ *History of the Inquis.*, B. 1, Chap. xv.

States under their jurisdiction, which proves to evidence, that the Pope had no preference for them in particular. In 1255, at the prayer of St. Louis, Alexander IV. divided the French Inquisition between the Friars-Preachers and Friars-Minors.\* In 1285, the Inquisition of Sardinia was committed to the Friars-Minor by Pope Honorius IV.† At the end of the same century they held the office in Syria and Palestine.‡

Moreover it is well to remember that for a long time the inquisitors had not the power of judging causes in heresy. It was only under Innocent IV., about seventy years after the Council of Verona, that this right was conferred on them and they had a tribunal of their own properly so called.§

Up to that time the bishops remained sole judges of the matters laid before them by the inquisitors, and even after the definite constitution of this tribunal, no sentence of condemnation could be pronounced without the assent

\* Bergier's Dict. de Theolog., at the word *Inquisit.*

† Hist. of Inquisit., B. 1, Chap. xvi.

‡ Ibid.

§ Ibid., B. 1, Chap. xv.

of the bishops. "When the bishop and inquisitor," says Lymborch, "are not agreed, they can not proceed to a definitive sentence, but are obliged to lay the process before the Pope, or in Spain before the supreme court of the Inquisition." \* Consequently, the bishops have been always the principal and ordinary judges of the Inquisition, while no religious order was exclusively called to its administration—and this is more true of the Spanish Inquisition in particular than of any other.

There were in the Spanish Inquisition two solemn moments which we must be careful not to confound, one at the end of the fifteenth century, when the Moors were expelled from their last retreat in Granada, the other in the middle of the sixteenth century, under Philip II., when Protestantism threatened to propagate itself in Spain. The Committee of the Cortes distinguishes perfectly well between these two epochs, and it is not more energetic in its condemnation of Philip's Inquisition, than moderate in alluding to that of Ferdinand and Isabella. Of the

\* Hist. of Inquisit., B. 2, Chap. xvii.



former it says, "Philip II., that most absurd of princes, was the real founder of the Inquisition; his crafty policy it was that brought it to the pitch of power it attained."\* It says, of the latter, "The Inquisition was originally demanded and established by the kings of Spain, under difficult and extraordinary circumstances."† In effect, the taking of Granada did not finally decide between the Moors and Spaniards which of the two should remain masters of the Spanish soil—a question which had already occupied eight centuries. The Moors, in union with the Jews, and concealed under the assumed garb of Christianity, overspread Spain. "The riches of the Judaists, and their alliances with the most illustrious families of the monarchy, rendered them extremely formidable—they were in fact a nation within the nation."‡ The Cortes demanded severe measures against these abhorred enemies, and Ferdinand conceived that the Inquisition, but in a new and terrible form, would be the only means of finishing with them. All Europe understood it so; and when, subse

\* Report on the Tribunal of the Inquisition, &c., p. 69.

† Ibid., p. 37.

‡ Ibid., p. 33.

quently, Philip II. wished to introduce the Spanish Inquisition into Milan, the people rose and exclaimed in the streets, "It is tyranny to impose on a Christian city a form of Inquisition intended solely for Jews and Moors."\*

Ferdinand and Isabella having taken their course, "intrusted the interest of the faith to Gonsalvo de Mendoza, archbishop of Seville, and gave him an assistant in the Dominican, Thomas de Torquemada."† After various measures taken during the course of some years, "There was held at Seville an illustrious assembly of the learned in canon and civil law and theology, and here were drawn up the rules to be observed in the prosecution of heretics. They are the same laws that regulate the proceedings of the inquisitors at the present day, but have been added to, from time to time, by new enactments."‡

Charles the Fifth died after having commended the Inquisition to his son Philip II., in the following clause of his will: "I recommend to him above all things, to lavish favors and hon-

\* Lymberch, Hist. of Inquis., B. 1, Chap. xxvii.

† Ibid., Chap. xxiv.

‡ Ibid.

ors on the Holy Inquisition, divinely instituted against heretics," and he added in a codicil, "I pray him urgently, and with all the earnestness I can, and I enjoin it on him as his well-beloved father, in the name of his respectful love for me, zealously to bear in mind the one thing on which the salvation of all Spain depends—that is to say, that he should never suffer the heretics to go unpunished ; and, to this end, should load with favors the office of the Holy Inquisition, by whose vigilance the Catholic faith and Christian religion have been preserved and increased in these kingdoms."\*

Philip II. never lost sight of the will or the codicil. Like his father, he applied to the Protestants the Inquisition which Ferdinand and Isabella, in concert with all the other orders of Spain, had established against the Moors and Jews. He rendered it still harsher ; and invented, for the terror of heresy, that procedure so well known as *auto-da-fe*, in which the punishment became a kind of fête, equally extraordinary, whether we regard the spectators or the suf-

\* Lymborch, Hist. Inquisit., B. 1, Chap. xxx.

ferers. The first took place at Seville in 1559. Thenceforward the Spanish Inquisition—a political agency—an affair purely national and royal—drew down upon the object and history of the Inquisition a plausible calumny. Its strange proceedings stamped themselves on the imagination; and the Spanish nation itself, which was the witness and the sufferer, appeared to the world in an odious light. I do not undertake to justify it. Count Joseph de Maistre has undertaken to do it, in his “Letters on the Spanish Inquisition.” My task is quite of a different kind.

We now come to consider the share our order has borne in the Spanish Inquisition; and this we shall learn from the jurist Pegna, in his commentary on the *Directory of the Inquisitors*. “In Spain, Ferdinand, king of Aragon and Castile, fifth of that name, about the end of the year of our Lord 1476, as our histories testify, *withdrew the office of inquisitors from the Dominican Friars, and transferred it to the secular clergy*. At the same time, by pontifical authority, he commissioned the most illustrious Cardinal Mendoza to reconstruct the office in question. The latter,

in concert with a great number of learned men, established the laws and prescribed the order which the inquisitors were to follow in Spain.”\*

Lymborch makes express mention of the same thing. “This office is no longer, as formerly, intrusted to the Friars-Preachers or Dominicans. The transfer was gradually made *to secular clergy, learned in the canons and its laws*, until it finally became complete; so that the Dominicans have no further connection with it, unless when they are invited to determine the propositions to be discussed, or take a part purely consultative.”†

It was not till 1618 that Philip III. gave the Dominicans *one place* in the Supreme Council of the Inquisition, composed of from *eleven to thirteen* members.

An unheard-of circumstance will serve to give an idea of the credit enjoyed by the Dominicans in the Spanish Inquisition. Among them was Bartholomew Caranza, archbishop of Toledo, a

\* Pegna, Commentary on the Directory of the Inquisitors, by Nicholas Egonerie, 3d part, schol. 43.

† Hist. Inquis., B. 1, Chap. xxiv.

venerable man, who had been honored with the confidence of his sovereigns, and filled, with universal esteem, the first episcopal see in the monarchy. He was suddenly arrested by order of the Inquisition. Pius IV. remonstrated to no purpose. The Council of Trent, then sitting, interposed on his behalf without effect. The congregation, whose duty it was to examine publications, vainly pronounced his catechism orthodox—for on it his accusation had been grounded. The Inquisition was inexorable. It detained him eight years in prison, and would not consent to have him removed to Rome for trial, until commanded to do so by Philip II. Such was the influence of the Dominicans in the Spanish Inquisition, and such, likewise, that of a Pope and General Council, even when the injustice of the case was manifest. The whole procedure was accounted for in the witty expression of Caranza as he entered the Castle of St. Angelo—"I am still between my greatest friend and my greatest enemy; I mean my conscience and my archbishopric." \*

\* Lives of illustrious men of the Order of Preachers, by Father Tournon.

In a word, the Spanish Inquisition was a royal tribunal, "no ordinance of which could be published without the previous consent of the king"\*—a tribunal which the Spanish princes had sought to erect under the auspices of the Sovereign Pontiffs, but which was nowise subject to their discretion. For this reason the Popes always opposed its introduction into Naples, nor could the negotiation of Spain ever subdue this insurmountable reluctance.† Far from aggravating the rigors of the Inquisition, they were warned, by its abuses, to protect their own august responsibility before God and man. In 1542, Paul III. established the Roman Congregation of the Holy Office, which at first consisted of six cardinals, and revoked all the inquisitorial powers previously granted. Of this congregation (so mild has it ever been) we know nothing more than that when Galileo wished at all hazards to ground an astronomical system on the holy Scriptures, it twice treated him with the most magnificent delicacy.‡ Thus, while

\* Report on the Tribunal, &c., p. 89.

† Lymborch, Hist. of Inquis., B. 1, Chap. xxvi.

‡ Letter of Guicciardini and the Marquis Nicolini, embas-

Spain and Portugal flocked to their *auto-da-fé*, while France had her *chambres ardentes* for heretics, while Henry VIII. was victimizing his seventy thousand in the course of his reign, and while the good Queen Elizabeth was converting the disemboweled trunks of Catholics into troughs for horses—during this age of blood, Rome shed not a drop. Rome, at whose feet the three most glorious centuries of Italy had just bloomed—Rome who had witnessed the growth of Dante, Ariosto, Tasso, Machiavel, Bembo, Galileo, Guicciardini, and so many others whose names need not be spoken in order to be remembered—Rome surpassing herself in the extremity of her danger, conferred on the Vicar of God the inalienable title of universal inquisitor, and by a magic of which she alone has the secret, rendered this title invisible on the brow of the Pontiff as a sword is in its sheath. We shall be told all this was not so very difficult as there were no heretics in Rome to punish. But we say the object of the Inquisition was precisely to make sure that there should be no heretics to

sadors from Florence to Rome, quoted by Bergier in his Dictionary of Theology, article *Human Sciences*.



punish, and God has not permitted this honorable conception to be wholly unsuccessful. Rome has ever been the city of orthodoxy and meekness, pure as a virgin, and weak as one.

I think I have proved for so far, that the Dominicans were neither the inventors, nor promoters, nor principal agents of the Inquisition, and that no one is less responsible than they for the excesses committed in Spain. It is unquestionable that they took part in the Inquisition; but who in Europe did not? The Inquisition was absolutely progress, compared to what had gone before. Instead of a tribunal without the right to pardon, and subjected to the inflexible letter of the law, was constituted a tribunal of flexible character which could *insist* on pardon for the repentant, and handed over to the secular arm, the merest minority of the accused. The Inquisition saved thousands of men who should have perished by ordinary course of law. The Templars invoked its jurisdiction, "well knowing," say the historians, "that had they obtained such judges they could not have been condemned to death."\* And besides, can our

\* M. de Maistre, first letter on the Spanish Inquisition.

age complain of the Inquisition with any show of reason? Has it established the liberty of worship we hear so much of? Do we not live under a rigorously inquisitorial system, with a lie to back it out? Poor girls who lie on the bare earth \* are hunted after, because they live in conformity with an idea of faith; because instead of associating for some industrial purpose, they associate to work and pray—they are dragged before the tribunals. Men are found to demand their expulsion from their own hearths, and they shall perhaps obtain it. What more could the Inquisition have done? Orators are heard to denounce from the tribune the least whisper of religious feeling, and one might imagine they spent their entire lives endeavoring to catch the sound of any one French heart that beats with the pulse of a Christian in contact with another. What more could the Inquisition have done? These men who are so eager in persecution, ought at least to understand why the human race has at every period taken precautions against error. They ought to learn from their own passions that tyranny and error

\* *Affair of the Carmelites of Lisbourne.*

are inseparable. Let us then leave the past where it is so easy to mistake, and recur to the present.

Who are the persecutors in Europe, after a hundred years' declamation, in prose and verse, against persecution? Is there any need to mention it? The entire world rings with the complaints of Catholic Ireland, under the oppression of the English Church. We have seen Calvinist Holland drive the Belgian Catholics to extremities, and the interests of conservation powerless before the instincts of reforming tyranny. We have seen Protestant Prussia, with a king at her head, whom prosperity and adversity have been alike unable to instruct, throwing an archbishop into prison, and refusing him judges; treating conscience as an offense against the State; violating, on a question of spiritual benediction, the faith pledged to half a nation; and betraying, by a perpetual mixture of violence and hypocrisy, the character of a power which holds nothing sacred but what is so by fear. The entire world witnesses the martyrdom of the Polish Church—a mortal agony which seems fated to end with the ex-

tinction of the Polish nation and its faith. At the other extremity of Europe it has beheld spectacles not less barbarous; and this time the executioners were not kings, but rationalist liberalism, which sought, apparently in the entrails of Spanish and Portuguese friars, the secret of liberty of conscience. And, amid these savage scenes of oppression, where, in Europe, is liberty of conscience? One only nation, and that a Catholic nation, has truly established it. The Belgians, victorious over Holland by the divine aid, having it in their power to choose the constitution they thought fit, proclaimed in their charter a truth which will become every day more apparent; and that is, that the Catholic Church, in order to reign paramount, requires only her free action on the understanding and the will, and that she never has recourse to the secular power but for protection against her persecutors. This is the truth—that truth which will justify the Church at the tribunal of God, and before the congregated human family one day, face to face with him. Yes; kings and nations—majesties of this earth—the Catholic Church asks of you, in the words of Bossuet,

the right of passage only—but that passage must be *free*. This is all she requires to excel you, every one, in strength; not that overbearing strength which should interfere with your temporal concerns, but that winning strength which shall draw you, soul and body, onward to eternity. This you well know; and, because you do not wish to undergo this spiritual attraction, you dry up its sources as much as possible. Do as you please, you are the masters: but, at least, acknowledge your own work. And, should it happen that an entire people becoming Catholic, take measures against a return of your iniquity, do not accuse it of persecution, unless the slave who shuts up his jailer when he can, be a persecutor, or the intended victim who repels the assassin be a butcher.

Let us be generous. We admit, if you wish, that truth and error have been equally intolerant. Well; and how is the world the better for the fatal struggle? Truth has not destroyed error; and error has not destroyed truth. Victory on one point has been balanced by defeat upon another. Is it not time to abandon paths so unfortunate? Are not sixteen centu-

ries of bloody vicissitudes enough for our instruction? Let us at length set bounds to the evils of the past, and let this stone of the covenant, planted by common accord between what has been and what shall be—let it be for our descendants prophetic of a better solution of the problems of humanity than has been expected from the sword, and the sword has failed to give.

## CHAPTER VII.

## CONCLUSION.

I HAVE proclaimed to my country, without fear, what I think; I do believe she has reason to deal favorably with me. To the reasons I have already given I shall add one more. One of the bases of modern society is the infinite subdivision of property, by its equal repartition among the children of a family, and the admission of every citizen to the social functions in honorable rivalry: neither of these two principles can be touched without attacking the very essence of modern society. Now, just and necessary as they are, they have their inconveniences; because nothing on this earth is exempt from a certain infirmity, which is the germ of death in the midst of life. From the equal division of property it results that the diminution of fortunes keeps pace with the increase of popu-

lation. Owing to this fact, scarce any one born in France has an existence secured to him; while, on the other hand, the state is not rich enough to assign an honorable part in the administration of affairs to all the ambitions which spring from want and from competition. It is impossible that such a state of things should not give rise to great moral sufferings. Nothing could be finer than the words of Alexander, bequeathing his empire *to the most worthy*; but nothing can be more wretched than was the actual division of it among his generals. We are present at a similar spectacle. You need only have lived amid our youth to know the pangs of those hearts to which every thing is attainable, and yet by whom scarce any thing is reached.

The universal peace now prevailing, and destined one day to be more solid than it is, augments these causes of uneasiness. This being so, why should we exclude our youth from the resource of life in community. If our individual fortunes are too small, let us join them. If we are worsted in the social struggle, let us leave it. No one hitherto has opposed associations of



mere labor. Why oppose societies in which labor is combined with religion? Must the most natural things be treated as unlawful as soon as Christianity becomes an element in them?

It is impossible to disguise it from ourselves, that religious communities are our only resource against perpetual revolution. Mankind will not retrace its steps toward the past: never will it take refuge in the old aristocratic institutions, how grievously soever it may be burdened, but it will seek in voluntary associations, based on labor and religion, a cure for the wound of rationalism. I appeal to the tendencies which everywhere display themselves. If the government suffer those generous tendencies (under observation, of course) to obey their impulse, it will avert great catastrophes. Human nature has that admirable property of bearing with her the remedy as well as the disease. Let us leave her to act a little, and not regret the words of the Scripture, that God has created the nations capable of cure.

I think, therefore, I perform the duty of a good citizen, as well as of a good Catholic, in re-

establishing the order of Preachers in France. If my country suffer it, she shall not be perhaps ten years without having to congratulate herself on its accomplishment. If she do not, we shall take our stand upon her frontiers, in some country nearer the pole of the future, and there we shall positively bide the time of God and France. The main point is, that there be French brethren in the order, that a little of that generous blood flow under the habit of St. Dominic. As to the soil itself, its turn will come. Sooner or later France will come to the predestined rallying point, where Providence awaits her; there, according to the prediction of M. de Maistre, will she meet Catholic England, and all Europe will sing High Mass at St. Sophia. I believe it all, and I can afford to wait.

Whatever treatment my country has in store for me, I shall not complain. I shall hope in her to my last breath. I understand even her injustice, and I respect her very errors, not as a courtesan adores her paramour, but as a friend who knows how closely good and evil are bound up in the heart of his friend. These sentiments

are too old in me ever to decay ; and, even should I not reap the fruit of them, they shall continue to the end my guests and my consolation.

END OF THE MEMORIAL.



















